Hafa Adai!

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Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXIX, Issue No. 16
THURSDAY JANUARY 24, 2019
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SCHOOL SUPPLIES DONATION KIMBERLY BAUTISTA

Students who currently reside at the Kagman Emergency Shelter Facility as a result of Super Typhoon Yutu received school supplies from the CNMI Fire and Emergency Medical Services Association and the Lady Diann Torres Foundation yesterday.

See story on Page 4

Special elections underway

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

» Torres sets polls for vacant House seat on March 23

Candidates who wish to run in the upcoming special elections can now submit their nominating petition and other documents after Gov. Ralph DLG Torres already declared a date for the election to fill the vacant Precinct 3 seat left by the untimely passing of former representative Francisco S. Dela Cruz.

Torres, in a proclamation yesterday, set the special election on March 23, a Saturday. The proclamation is in accordance to Article II Section 9 of the CNMI Constitution, which states that "a vacancy in the Legislature shall be filled by special election if one half or more of the term remains."

Dela Cruz, who was elected for another term in the 21st Legislature after the Nov. 13, 2018 elections, died last Jan. 6—a week before the

See ELECTIONS on Page 4

Wanted: More toilets in Marpi

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

» As tourists allegedly continue to defecate up north

Tourists allegedly continue to leave their fecal remnants near popular tourist sites up north, according to the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality.

As tourists continue to return following the devastation of Super Typhoon Yutu, many previous concerns begin to resurface like driving into some of Saipan's beautiful beaches and defecating at or near the many tourist sites located in the northernmost parts of Saipan.

See MARPI on Page 4

CEC opens filing of candidacy for special polls

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

» Registration of voters for Precinct 3 already closed

The Commonwealth Election Commission opened yesterday the submission for nominating petition and candidacy following Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' proclamation for a special election to fill the vacant seat existing in the House of Representatives for Precinct 3.

CEC administrative hearing officer Kayla S. Igitol, in an interview, also disclosed that registration for Precinct 3 was officially closed yesterday.

Igitol said the last day of submission of nominating petitions and candidacy documents is Feb. 8, 2019.

She said two persons had already picked up petition forms from their office yesterday afternoon, but she does not know if the petition were for themselves or for someone else.

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ASIA
Sultan Muhammad V became the Malaysia's first king to give up his post when he abruptly abdicated on Jan. 6 without explanation.
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ENVIRONMENT
Earth's oceans had their warmest year on record in 2018, a stark indication of the enormous amount of heat being absorbed by the sea as greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise.
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LIFE & STYLE
Oscar voters on Tuesday showered Alfonso Cuaron's "Roma" and Yorgos Lanthimos' "The Favourite" with a leading 10 nominations for the 91st Academy Awards.
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Local

‘H-2B ban on PH prerogative of US’

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Philippine honorary consul to the CNMI said the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services’ decision to remove the Philippines from H-2B and H-2A visa program was a decision for Washington, D.C. to carry out and nobody else.

“It is their prerogative,” Philippine honorary consul to the CNMI Glicerio Arago noted in an interview last Tuesday.

Saipan Tribune solicited his comments after the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in a Jan. 19, 2019 post in the Federal Register noted that the Philippines, Ethiopia, and the Dominican Republic are among the list of countries banned from applying for H-2A or H-2B visas.

The notice cited high overstay rates for H-2B visa holders from the Philippines and the Dominican Republic, while Ethiopia was removed from the eligible list due to its designation of “at risk of non-compliance” since 2016. It further noted that the U.S. Embassy in Manila issues the largest number of T-visas—visas usually afforded to severe human trafficking – among all U.S. posts around the world.

“U.S. Embassy Manila issued approximately 40 percent of the total T-derivative visas issued worldwide from fiscal year 2014 [through] fiscal year 2016,” the notice wrote.

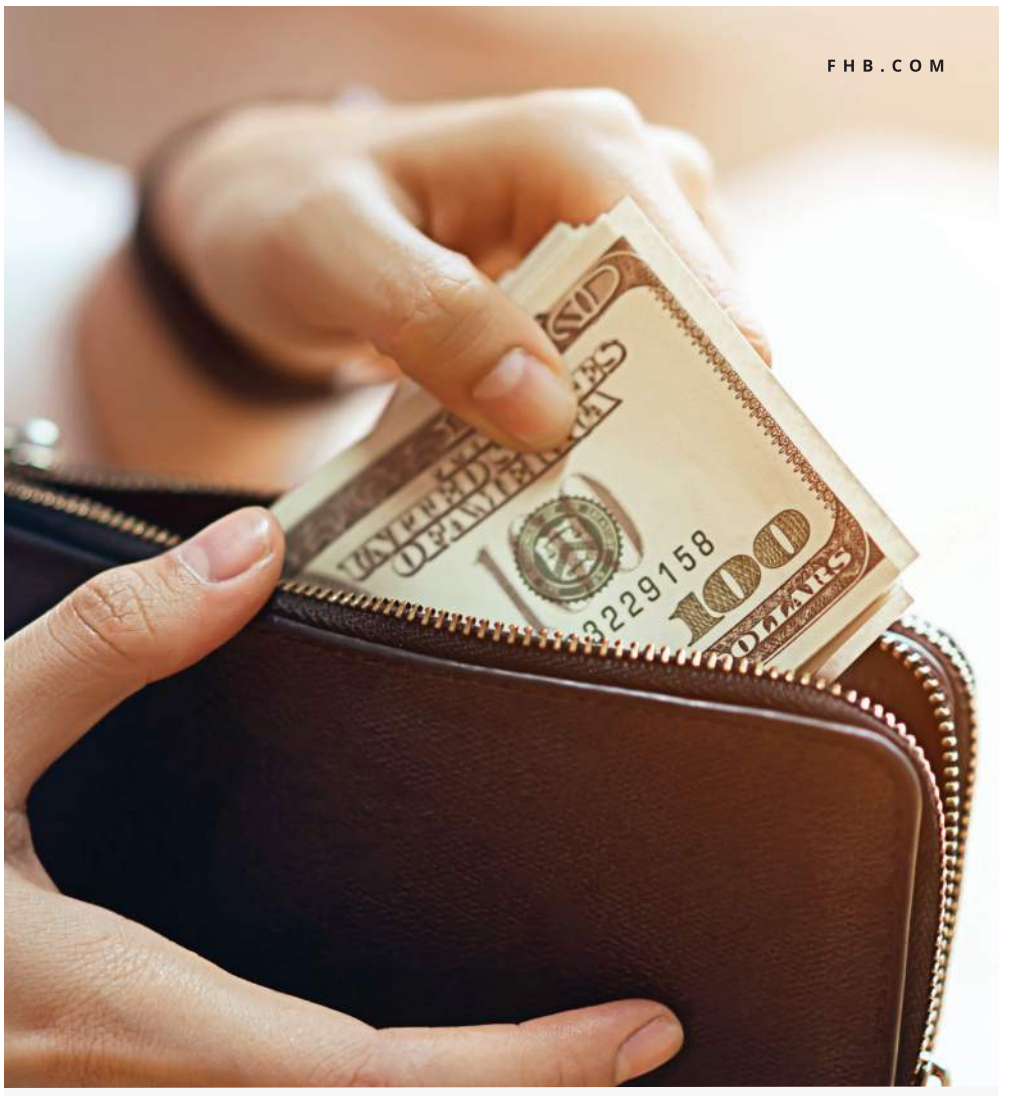
“The Philippines’ continued inclusion [to the program] creates the potential for abuse, fraud, and other harm to the integrity of the H-2A or H-2B visa programs,” it continued.

“What is important now is for the Philippine government to properly represent itself and deal with Washington, D.C. [regarding] this problem,” Arago said. “This [visa] is very critical, especially for Filipino construction workers,” he noted.

The *Pacific Daily News* noted there are about 1,300 freshly approved H-2B visas for Guam, 606 of which were on island as of Tuesday, the media outlet noted quoting the Guam Department of Labor.

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC in late March 2018 reported that they have procured 1,542 H-2B visa holders from Taiwan and Philippines. The company did not specify what percentage of the 1,542 H-2B visa holders were from the Philippines.

Saipan Tribune reached out to a representative of the Philippine Consulate in Guam for comment, but it did not immediately issue a statement.



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Ex-VIP services host insists claim for fraud vs IPI clear, convincing

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A former VIP services host at the Imperial Pacific Resort and Casino insists that the fraud claim in her lawsuit against its owner, Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC, is clear and plausible or convincing.

Shirline Loh, through counsel William M. Fitzgerald, however concedes that her Commonwealth wage claim brought under local law should be dismissed on statute of limitations grounds.

On Loh’s fraud and conversion claim, Fitzgerald said money was given by customers to IPI with the direction that it be given to VIP hosts as “tips.”

Fitzgerald discussed the “tips” issue in Loh’s opposition to IPI’s motion to dismiss her lawsuit.

The lawyer said Loh’s supervisor, Yuki Xia, acting on behalf of IPI, received this money and fraudulently converted it.

He said money intended for Loh was not received by her because of the wrongful conduct of Xia, acting on behalf of IPI.

Loh is suing IPI for allegedly not paying her minimum wage and overtime wages and refusing to give her customers’ tips.

Loh’s claims for violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act and Minimum Wage Hour Act, and conversion and fraud.

Loh is demanding that IPI be made to pay her the minimum wage and overtime pay. She also wants her share of tips.

IPI, through counsel Kelley M. Butcher, then moved the U.S. District Court for the NMI to dismiss Loh’s Commonwealth wage claim and claim for fraud.

Butcher said the Commonwealth wage claim alleged in the complaint should be dismissed with prejudice as they are barred by the statute of limitations.

Dismissal with prejudice means Loh can no longer refile the wage claims.

Butcher said the fraud claim should be dismissed as it fails to allege all of the elements of fraud and fails to allege fraud with particularity.

Loh is a citizen of Singapore. She currently resides there. According to Fitzgerald in the complaint, Loh worked for IPI from Oct. 15, 2015 to August 2016.

Butcher said Commonwealth law clearly sets forth a six-month limitation period for unintentional wage claims and a one year statute of limitations for intentional wage claims.

Butcher noted that a reading of the complaint in this case shows that it was filed more than one year after Loh’s separation from employment from IPI.

In Loh’s opposition to the motion to dismiss, Fitzgerald said the plaintiff has complied with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit’s requirement to supply the who, what, when, where, and how in a fraud claim.

Fitzgerald said IPI has also not supplied legal authority to support dismissal of Loh’s claims for fraud.

Fitzgerald said there is no mystery or question as to what Loh claims happened here, and IPI has been on clear notice of the specific claim it must defend.

Citing precedent cases, the lawyer said Loh has been fully and clearly provided sufficient facts to allow it to prepare “an adequate answer.”

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‘Active shooter’ threat forced two daycares to lockdown

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

An unofficial active shooter notice forced at least two schools to go on lockdown last Tuesday.

Both the Northern Marianas International School and the Golden Harvest International School Tuesday confirmed that they went on lockdown following a notice from Gordon Salas, Department of Community and Cultural Affairs supervisor for the Child Care License Program, regarding a reported active shooter situation in the Gualo Rai area.

Saipan Tribune learned that the active shooter threat on Gualo Rai was a false alarm. Specifically, the incident involved a robbery that was erroneously reported as an active shooting incident.

Salas told *Saipan Tribune* Tuesday that he issued an unofficial notice based off an unofficial active shooting report to all 25 service providers under the program out of an “abundance of caution.”

He noted that the unofficial active shooting situation report came from outside of the government, however, just to be safe, he notified the service providers under the program through WhatsApp messages at around 12noon and an email soon after regarding a “possible active shooting incident.” He further added that going on lockdown was a part of their procedure to defend against an active shooter.

“The active shooting incident was never validated but in an abundance of caution we notified everyone to take precautionary measures,” he said in an interview. He further noted that a secondary notice lifting the threat was not issued since they did not receive validation for the initial active shooting incident.

NMIS principal Jessica Reyes told *Saipan Tribune* that they went on lockdown after receiving news of an active shooter threat from Salas. She further noted that it was cleared before 1pm. There are over 50 students in the school.

DCCA Secretary Robert Hunter noted that a lockdown was the standard procedure to such a situation.

“…That is the procedure and every one of these incidents that happen…as soon as we get a notice, [the daycares] go into lockdown,” he said. “[A relative of mine] goes into one of [the daycares] … and I know that [going on lockdown] has happened a couple of times over the last year,” he continued.

BECQ: Car rental companies should undergo tour guide certification

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality believes that car rental companies should participate in the Marianas Visitors Authority’s tour guide certification program to educate tourists on the dos and don’ts while driving in the CNMI.

As tourists continue to return to the CNMI, former concerns start to resurface like the practice of proper road laws and more.

Cabrera

According to BECQ administrator Eli Cabrera, it might be time that car rental companies be required to undergo tour guide certification training in order to properly educate their clients about the CNMI’s driving laws.

“The MVA’s program is supposed to take care of some of these concerns through their tour guide certification. I hope that car rentals are included because that’s mostly where tourists go,” he said.

Division of Environmental Quality director Ray Masga said that it’s important that car rental companies are educated because most tourists are first-timers and know little of Saipan and its rules and regulations in terms of driving safety.

“These could also be first time tourists. They don’t know what the rules are but the only place they would get first-hand information from is where they get the vehicles,” he said.

One of the most common concerns reported, according to both Cabrera and Masga, was driving on beaches and even driving straight into open water.

“One of the issues we brought up was this, driving into the sand, so if they were part of the certification, these car rentals are suppose to instruct their clients not to drive on the sand or into the water,” Masga said.

Cabrera said that the Department of Public Safety should also be vigilant in enforcing the prohibition of driving on beaches with the tourists.

“We have all the necessary tools but it’s the enforcement. DPS is patrolling the roads every day … so DPS is the most appropriate people to do these kinds of things…. DPS should do their part, citation, and rental companies should know better. They will never know until they get that citation,” he said.

BECQ is urging community members to report tourists if they are seen driving on beaches.

“They might spill gas or a drop of oil from the engine could go into the beach and the sand…many things can happen …If they call us, we can contact DPS immediately and they’ll be on the way…call us and we’ll respond immediately,” he said.

4 Saipan beaches red-flagged

The Division of Environmental Quality has red-flagged four Saipan beaches and is advising the public not to fish or swim within 300 feet of these locations for the next 48 hours or until otherwise notified.

Affected sites are Central Repair Shop, American Memorial Park, Garapan Fishing Dock, and CK Dist#2 Drain.

Samples collected from these locations contained excessive concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria (enterococci) that exceeded the CNMI Marine Water Quality Standards. These bacteria can indicate the presence of human and animal waste in the water.

DEQ analyzes water samples collected from Saipan’s recreational beaches and storm drainage every Tuesday. For more information, contact DEQ at 664-8500. ***(DEQ)***

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IN HIS REQUEST FOR COURT-APPOINTED COUNSEL

Atalig allowed to file financial affidavit under seal

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federal court granted yesterday Rota Mayor Efraim M. Atalig's unopposed request to file under seal his financial affidavit and declaration in support of his motion for the court to appoint counsel to represent him in his criminal case.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona said "upon good cause shown," she grants Atalig permission to file his financial affidavit and declaration under seal.

In his request to seal, Atalig, through private counsel David G. Banes, said he plans to file a motion to appoint counsel under the Criminal Justice Act program and to include a financial affidavit and/or a declaration that discusses confidential personal financial information.

Banes said he has informed counsel for the U.S. government of Atalig's intent to move for appointed counsel.

He said the U.S. government prosecutor has indicated that CJA appointment eligibility is a matter between the court, Atalig, and his counsel.

Atalig

Last December, Atalig, through his private counsel Denny Nie, informed the court that he may be eligible for a court-appointed counsel.

Nie and Banes are lawyers of the O'Connor, Berman, Horey, and Banes law firm that Atalig hired as his private counsel.

Nie asked the court for the release of Atalig's previous financial disclosure affidavit to their law firm due to changes in the mayor's financial status.

Last September, Manglona determined that the mayor is not eligible for a court-appointed counsel. This prompted Atalig to hire the O'Connor law firm to represent him.

In federal court, Atalig and his girlfriend, Evelyn M. Atalig, are indicted with five corruption charges for arranging CNMI government-funded trips to California, Republic of Palau, Guam, and Saipan under fraudulent pretenses.

The Ataligs pleaded not guilty of all charges.

Kagman shelter students get donation of school supplies

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI Fire and Emergency Medical Services Association and the Lady Diann Torres Foundation teamed up to donate over 30 bags of school supplies to students currently living at the Kagman Emergency Shelter Facility.

Yesterday, during an interview with CNMI Fire and EMS Association vice president Derek Gersonde, he said that the association in partnership with the First Lady Diann Torres Foundation set up donation boxes to raise funds that would go to the purchase of school supplies for 35 students who remain in the shelter as a result of Super Typhoo Yutu that barreled across the CNMI three months ago.

"About a month and a half ago, we put out at all Joeten Enterprises and majority of the hotels on the island, we put out donation boxes and the community and the establishments have been collecting and donating stuff," he said.

"These will be going to the kids from the shelters… specifically the students from the south…so we will be giving bags with school supplies in them as well as gift certificates that are specifically for [the Public School System] and PSS will hand those out," he added.

Gersonde said that the partnership between the association and the foundation has proven to be successful before that's why they decided to band together again to help the children who remain at the shelter three months post Yutu.

"The more the merrier…. she's been doing great work. This is not the first time we partnered with her…we did the Ayuda Luta as well," he said.

According to one of the Kagman shelter staff, about 22 families still remain at the shelter.

Jackie Quitugua, PSS Office of Curriculum and Instructional Services associate commissioner, said that PSS is grateful that associations and foundations continue to think about the well-being of the students.

"We are graciously thankful for the gesture of giving for our children. We're just so happy that the thoughts for our children continues and of course recovery takes time and it just mean so much because we know giving from the heart is very precious and we're grateful for that. So to all our continued donors, and benefactors, we are very thankful," she said.

Quitugua added that PSS values the relationship between them and their donors and benefactors.

"We continue to collaborate and partner with many people and especially making sure that our relationships are true and it's there with the many things we do and provide for our children. Relationships really matter and we want to continue these very healthy, awesome, and amazing relationships and partnerships," she said.

CLOTHING SUPPLIES — FERDIE DE LA TORRE
Volunteers of the Lady Diann Torres Foundation prepare donated clothing for various ages as they join the CNMI government's final round of distribution of Super Typhoon Yutu relief goods and supplies last Saturday at the Garapan Fishing Base.

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Happy 13th birthday Avalone Jennay A. Mendiola. Welcome to your teenage years. May you have a teenrific, fun, and blessed day. From The Family.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

ELECTIONS

From Page 1

first organizational session of the House on Jan. 14. House Speaker Blas Jonathan T. Attao (R-Saipan) notified Torres that a vacancy exists that's why a special election is needed.

He placed fifth to earn one of the six seats allotted for Precinct 3 joining independent Rep. Edmund S. Villagomez, and fellow GOP lawmakers Rep. Ivan A. Blanco, House Speaker Blas Jonathan T. Attao, Rep. Ralph N. Yumul, and Rep. Jose I. Itibus.

"The term remaining in the vacant seat is greater than one half of the two-year term and thus must be filled by a special election. I do hereby proclaim and call for a special election to be held for the purpose of electing an individual to fill the vacant seat existing in the House of Representatives for the Third Senatorial District (Precinct 3)," as stated in the proclamation.

The Commonwealth Election Commission had already put out a request for absentee ballots yesterday, which was also the first day of the submission of nominating petitions of candidates and other required documents.

Former representative Donald C. Barcinas, who placed seventh among 12 candidates, said he will be running again for his previous seat when he was still part of the GOP supermajority in the 20th Legislature. He bolted the local Republican Party because of his different view on Public Law 20-66, which authorized the regulation and control of marijuana use in the Commonwealth.

It is not yet known if the other five losing candidates—independents Vicente C. Camacho, Mariano DLG Fajardo, David C. Sablan, Luis S. Tilipao, and former representative Stanley Torres would again file their respective certificates of candidacies.

The CNMI Republican Party has also began organizing themselves with the board of directors asking their members who want to run to submit their letter of intent to Precinct III club chair Joaquin Ogumoro.

"For now, we're asking for letters of intent from anyone who wanted to run for the vacant seat. We don't know yet who are those aspiring and how many are they until we receive their letter," Ogumoro told *Saipan Tribune* in a telephone interview yesterday.

He added that the Republican Party leadership will then choose who would be the best candidate among those who submitted their letters that could win Dela Cruz's vacant seat.

The other important dates for the special election are the following:

- Feb 8: The last day for submission of the nominating petitions;
- Feb. 20: CEC's last day to act on nominating petitions;
- Feb. 26: Last day for absentee voting application;
- March 8: Designation of polling places;
- March 16: Posting/distribution of specimen ballots and start of early voting;
- March 22: Last day for early voting;
- April 7: Removal of campaign materials; and
- May 12: Disclosure of campaign financial reports.

MARPI

From Page 1

According to Eli Cabrera, BECQ administrator and previous Parks & Recreation director, tourists now defecate not just in beaches but other areas too including bushes and roadsides.

"If you talk with Parks & Recreation, they'll tell you 'yes.' I was a director there for a while and oh man…Pau Pau beach up north, we were eating in one of the pavilions and a lady just took a crap on the side…even at the entrance by the Marpi, by the flame tree, there's plenty there, it's not just the beaches… Even up at the Mt. Tapochao, they'll tell me," Cabrera said.

A source at the Grotto also mentioned that he witnessed floating feces within the Grotto pool during high tide and couldn't believe his eyes.

Cabrera said that one of the reasons that tourists continue to defecate up north is because of the lack of comfort rooms in the area.

"The problem is there's no toilet so these tourists take a crap on the bushes or by the long grass …The road to Marpi, between San Roque and Marpi, there's no toilet except Last Command Post…then there's one at Banzai Cliff… and the only other one is the Grotto. Those are the only restrooms in Marpi…sometimes it's locked because there's no water…" he said.

Cabrera said that the Marianas Visitors Authority should consider placing portable restrooms in these areas for tourists to utilize and see if it would solve the problem.

When asked if Parks & Recreation is responsible for the clean up of feces near tourists spots, Cabrera said it's not because although their job is to clean these areas, they aren't trained and equipped to deal with feces which could carry hazardous contaminants.

Cabrera said that staff of the Division of Sanitation are trained to clean fecal remains from these sights, Parks & Recreation is only responsible for picking up trash and cleaning up the area.

CEC

From Page 1

Igitol said a candidate needs 50 signatures in the nominating petition.

Igitol said as soon as Torres signed the proclamation, the registration is closed.

"It's in the law. We have to close the registration 60 days period to an election," she said.

Torres set the special election for March 23, 2019.

Igitol said as of last week, there were 3,803 registered voters for Precinct 3.

"Right now, we're still purging out the names [of registered voters]. So, this number will change," she said.

Igitol said they have not decided yet as to the location of the polling place.

There is a vacant House seat after Rep. Francisco S. Dela Cruz (R-Saipan) passed away on Tinian last Jan. 6.

Dela Cruz, who was a member of the 20th Legislature, won his re-election bid in the last Nov. 13 election, finishing fifth among 13 candidates for the six seats of Precinct 3.

14-year Red Cross employee bids farewell

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A long-serving employee of the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter last week said her final goodbyes to the office along Airport Road for her last day with the charity and disaster response organization.

Mary Ann Taman, a 14-year employee at the local chapter of the Red Cross, bid her final goodbye to executive director John Hirsh as she is set to move to Oregon.

"It was a very hard decision [to leave] but at the end of the day, we have to prioritize our [family]," she said. Taman is leaving Saipan with her husband to follow her son, Kenneth, in Oregon. Kenneth left for the Beaver State in the summer of 2018, Taman noted.

"The American Red Cross-NMI Chapter is an amazing organization. I didn't know what I was getting into when I first applied, but once you are a part of [the organization] you get that family dynamic—like you belong to an amazing group of different people," she said.

"I just love life here…. When you help someone, the reward is you get to help somebody," she added.

Hirsh said in an interview that one of his two staff leaving affects the organization even more.

"[Taman] has been working with the me personally for about 15 years. She is really a dedicated Red Cross member of our team and we just couldn't do without her. She is organized and have provided amazing contributions to the American Red Cross over the last 15 years," Hirsh said.

"We are going to lose her, and she would [be leaving] very big shoes to fill," he continued.

"We are sad [to see her leave] but, on the other hand, excited for her," he said.

ERWIN ENCINARES

Mary Ann Taman, center, poses with American Red Cross-NMI Chapter executive director John Hirsh and a colleague at the ARC office.

NMHC continues to look for home unit owners

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Northern Marianas Housing Corp. is still on the look out for home unit owners who have available units up for rent to aid Super Typhoon Yutu victims.

According to NMHC office manager/procurement officer Jacob Muña, the agency is still urging individuals or companies who have available home units to inform the corporation so they can disseminate the information to those who need them most.

In a previous interview Muña, he affirmed the lack of alternative homes due to the widespread destruction of Super Typhoon Yutu.

In order to assist individuals who are in search of a homes in this difficult time, NMHC is asking home unit owners and companies to inform the corporation of any available units so that they can pass on the appropriate information to individuals who inquire about available housing.

As of now, Muña said that the corporation is limited to the help they can give in terms of housing because the waiting lists for their housing programs have been closed for months due to maximum capacity.

The unit may be a single-house dwelling or apartment unit.

The vendor, company, or landlord is required to provide information such as company name, contact number, email address, number of bedrooms, number of available units, and amenities provided.

For any questions or concerns, Muña can be contacted 234-6866/9447 or 483-9447; you may also email him at officemanager@nmhcgov.net.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality
Division of Coastal Resources Management
P.O. Box 501304, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel.: (670) 664-8300; Fax: (670) 664-8315
www.dcrm.gov.mp

Eli D. Cabrera
Administrator

Janice E. Castro
Director, DCRM

PUBLIC NOTICE

From the COMMONWEALTH OF THE NOTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM of the CNMI'S DIVISION OF COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

DATE: January 24, 2019

NOTICE: The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality (BECQ) Division of Coastal Resource Management (DCRM) is currently reviewing a federal consistency determination from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regarding the proposed burning of vegetative and untreated lumber debris generated by Typhoon Yutu. The burning will occur at the Marpi Solid Waste Management Facility by using a Trench Type Air Curtain Incinerator Unit.

More information on the proposed activity is available on the Federal Consistency page of the DCRM website at https://dcrm.gov.mp/wp-content/uploads/crm/FEMA_YutuBurning_Marpi_consistencydetermination.pdf.

Federal consistency is a provision of the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) that requires federal actions that affect the coastal zone to be consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the enforceable policies of a coastal state's federally approved coastal management plan.

Comments on whether the project is consistent with the enforceable policies of the CNMI's coastal management program can be submitted to the Division of Coastal Resource Management at FedCon@dcrm.gov.mp.

This public notice has been published for compliance with 15 CFR § 930.42. Given the emergency nature of the proposed activity, DCRM is shortening the public comment period to (4) days, starting on January 24, 2019 and ending on January 27, 2019. We welcome your feedback and thank you for your consideration.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
ADDENDUM NO. 2
RFP19-DOF-002

"GROUP LIFE INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AND RETIREES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE"

Due to the on-going recovery after Super Typhoon Yutu, the Secretary of the Department of Finance would like to extend the proposal opening for Fifteen (15) days. Therefore, this Addendum is issued to re-schedule the proposal submission and opening dates.

- Interested proposers may submit questions or inquiries regarding this RFP, in writing, *no later than 04:00 p.m., local time, January 04, 2019* is changed to **no later than 4:00 p.m., local time, January 25, 2019** to Ms. Larrisa Larson, Secretary, Department of Finance, by facsimile to (670) 664-1115. Responses from the Secretary be directed to all parties who have picked up a Request for Proposal from the Office of the Secretary of Finance, Capitol Hill, Saipan MP, 96950.

- Sealed proposals submittals for this project must be submitted with **one (1) original and three (3) copies** to the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Ascencion Drive, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan n*o later than 09:30 a.m., local time, January 11, 2019* is changed to read **no later than 09:30 a.m., local time, February 14, 2019** and must be marked RFP19-DOF-002.

- Proposers outside the Commonwealth must notify the Director of Procurement and Supply, in writing, of their intent to submit a Notice of Intent to propose in order to receive this additional seven (7) working days for the receipt of the actual proposal documents. This Notice of Intent to Propose may be any mode of written communication including facsimile to (670) 664-1515 or e-mailed to procurement@cnmidof.net but must be received no later than 09:30 a.m., local time, *January 11, 2019* is changed to read **09:30 a.m., local time, February 14, 2019**.

- Proposals submitted by firms outside the Commonwealth must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country by January 11, 2019 is change to read **February 14, 2019** and mailed to the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply to P.O. Box 510008, C.K., Saipan, MP 96950 and the proposal documents must be received at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than *January 22, 2019* is changed to read **February 25, 2019**.

All other requirements of the Request for Proposal project package shall remain as stated.

The provisions of the CNMI Procurement Regulations, NMIAC Section 70-30.3-725 and 70-30.3-730 prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks, and Contingent Fees shall apply.

The CNMI Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids or portions thereof, and waive any immaterial defects if to do so would be in the best interest of the CNMI government.

/s/ JOSEPH A. TUDELA
ACTING, DIRECTOR OF P&S

cc: Secretary of Finance

January 23, 2019
End of Addendum No.2

MVA marks steady recovery in December 2018

According to the Marianas Visitors Authority, arrivals to the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota continued to make steady recovery in December 2018 following Super Typhoon Yutu, which hit the destination in October 2018.

December marked a halfway point in recovery at 26,831 visitors, 53-percent lower than the 57,331 visitors received December 2017 but a marked increase over the 6,000 visitors who visited the islands in November 2018.

"In December, The Marianas saw a 40-percent increase in visitors from the previous month. This shows a steady recovery in arrivals following Yutu and a restored sense of confidence among visitors that we are again a beautiful and welcoming place to visit," said MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. "There is still demand for the destination, and we look forward to welcoming more visitors and to the full restoration of flights and the commence of new flights from Japan and Taiwan in 2019."

Arrivals from China are 16-percent lower compared to December 2017 at 15,827 visitors. HK Express and Hong Kong Airlines service from Hong Kong and other flights from cities in mainland China including Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou, and Hangzhou were all resumed in November. To deliver a strong message that The Marianas is ready to receive more Chinese tourists, the MVA encouraged travel agent sales by sponsoring a Sweetour blogger trip, Brighten Travel Agent FAM tour, Hangzhou Agent FAM tour, Beijing Media FAM tour with Century Tours and Asiana Airlines' client banquet. The 2018 Shenzhen International Tourism Expo was joined with key partners. Promotion for the 2019 Saipan Marathon was undertaken with Wanda Sports and other running platforms through online and offline activities, including recruitment at 2018 China Sports Culture Expo & China Sports Tourism Expo, 2018 Xiamen Marathon, and IRONMAN 70.3 Xiamen.

Arrivals from Korea dropped 76 percent to 7,125 visitors in December. Asiana Airlines resumed its night time flights from Seoul Incheon on Dec. 20, following Jeju Air's earlier resumption of daily daytime flights from Seoul Incheon on Nov. 27. Its night time daily flights from Busan resumed on Dec. 21. Jeju Air's daily night time flights from Incheon were scheduled to resume on Jan. 21, and T'way Air's night time flights will resume five times weekly on. Mar. 31, increasing to daily flights on May 15.

Arrivals from Japan were 8-percent lower than December 2017 at 942 visitors due to the lack of direct flights to Saipan. Skymark Airlines has officially announced the commencement of direct service from Japan to The Marianas in 2019. A team of 30 Skymark staff members visited Saipan in December for preparations, to present their plans at the MVA general membership meeting, and to meet with members of the Japan Saipan Travel Association to confirm commencement of charter flights in March. Skymark has also contracted office space at Saipan International Airport.

Source markets economic highlights

South Korea's economy could grow around 2.6-2.7 percent in 2019 amid a slowing global economy and U.S.-China trade disputes, the South Korean Ministry of Economy and Finance said. The average USD/WON exchange rate in December was 1123.52 won, a slight decrease from the previous rate of 1124.85 won in November.

In China in November 2018, the nationwide consumer price index increased by 2.2 percent compared to the previous November. Although the exchange rate of the USD - RMB has risen, it has little effect on the price of the Spring Festival products. The price is basically the same as previous years, which is beneficial to the public to choose an outbound tour.

Japan's consumer price inflation eased to a five-month low of 0.8 percent year-on-year in November 2018 from 1.4 percent in the previous month, in line with market expectations. The Bank of Japan left its key short-term interest rate unchanged at -0.1 percent at its December meeting, even after the Federal Reserve raised rates for the fourth time this year. Japan National Tourism Organization reported that the number of Japanese overseas travelers was up 12.8 percent year on year, reaching 1,646,200 in October 2018 (preliminary figures). ***(PR)***

CUC announces power interruptions Saturday

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. would like to inform the general public that there will be emergency power interruptions on the following date, times and locations:

Saturday, Jan. 26, 2019 (8:30am-11:30am)

- **Outage type:** Sectionalized feeder outage on the Feeder 1 (partial) and Feeder 3 double distribution circuit.
- **Village location:** Chalan Pale Arnold Road in Garapan.
- **Areas affected:** Garapan Elementary School, Kristo Rai Church, Upper Miha, Chinatown, Flores Rosa Street in Garapan, Best Sunshine, Northern Gualo Rai, As Falape and the Entire Sugar King area.
- **Traffic Light Intersections affected:** Chinatown/Middle Road Traffic Light Intersection and Gualo Rai/Middle Road Traffic Light Intersection.
- **Water wells affected:** GR-151, GR-154, GR-4 and GR-5 (Entire Gualo Rai area)
- **Wastewater lift stations affected:** S-4
- **Pole replacements:** 4

Saturday, Jan. 26, 2019 (3:30am-6pm)

- **Outage type:** Sectionalized feeder outage on the Feeder 1 (partial) and Feeder 3 double distribution circuit
- **Areas affected:** Northern Sadog Tasi, Puerto Rico (Pattida Drive, Saluda Street, Pantalan Circle, Puerto Rico Drive), Social Security Building, Bank of Hawaii (Puerto Rico) and the Shell Gas Station (Puerto Rico)
- **Traffic Light Intersections affected:** Puerto Rico/Middle Road Traffic Light Intersection
- **Water wells affected:** CL2, CL5, CL Booster Station, Maui 4 Shaft, Maui Sump Tank, Maui Pumping Station, PR 164,RP1,RP Chlorine Station (Lower/Upper Navy Hill, Chinatown and As Falape). Customers should expect restoration of regular water services on Jan. 27, 2019 by 7:30am.
- **Wastewater lift stations affected:** Sadog Tasi Northern Sewer Treatment System
- **Pole replacements:** 3

The purpose of the power interruptions is to de-energize utility lines and allow CUC linemen the ability to conduct maintenance of the power distribution system through the replacement of wooden poles with concrete poles at the aforementioned locations listed. The scheduled power interruptions are a continuation of CUC's ongoing Super Typhoon Yutu restoration that focuses on strengthening and hardening CUC's power distribution system through the replacement of wooden poles with concrete poles.

Because of the scale of work that will be performed, CUC asks travelers to take alternate routes or to exercise caution when driving through the working area.

For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates (https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/). ***(PR)***

Lisa Manglona Dela Cruz, seated right, holds back her tears as she and her other members of their family listen to speeches delivered to honor the late representative Francisco S. Dela Cruz in last Tuesday's memorial tribute at the House of Representatives chamber of the Hon. Jesus P. Mafnas Memorial Building on Capital Hill. JON PEREZ

Legislature memorial for Dela Cruz

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Legislature last Tuesday held a memorial tribute to honor the years of public service of the late representative Francisco S. Dela Cruz. Both the House of Representatives and the Senate presented the family, led by Dela Cruz's widow Lisa and their children, with separate resolutions, while Gov. Ralph DLG Torres gave a memorial plaque honoring his outstanding contributions to the CNMI.

House Speaker Blas Jonathan T. Attao (R-Saipan) said that the former vice speaker in the 18th Legislature was a known faithful public servant. "His legacy is one that can never be duplicated, but can only be emulated by those who seek to serve in public office."

Dela Cruz, who died last Jan. 6, was a member of the House from the 15th to 18th Legislature and again in the 20th. He was reelected to serve again in the 21st Legislature but died before the inauguration last Jan. 14.

Attao recalled that while he was still a Legislative Bureau staff, he had the chance to work closely with Dela Cruz in several pieces of legislation. "I was able to witness first hand his sincere genuine demeanor and his remarkably unbreakable devotion to our beloved Commonwealth."

He added that Dela Cruz was one of the legislators who witnessed the CNMI's ups and downs while in office. "He remained humble as our Commonwealth was flourishing and resilient when it was dwindling."

Attao said Dela Cruz remained steadfast in going up against the inequalities and discrepancies that threaten the livelihood and well-being of the people. "When matters seemed dark and bewildered, [Dela Cruz] remained courageous and obstinate in doing what he felt in his heart was right event if it angered a few people."

"His loyalty transcended the boundaries of Precinct 3 and reached lengths as far out as our great Commonwealth could reach. The example he set forth throughout his tenure as an elected official, is one that many of us should follow and carry on as we face the pressing issues that plague our communities."

House floor leader John Paul P. Sablan (R-Saipan) spoke in behalf of the Third Senatorial District in conveying their condolences and prayers to the family of Dela Cruz. "We're deeply saddened of his untimely passing. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all."

"Representative Dela Cruz was a humble, hardworking, and true public servant for the people of Precinct 3 and the entire CNMI. We will forever treasure the memories of working with our beloved Frank. He is a true statesman and for that we thank you for allowing us to hold this memorial tribute."

Torres, in his brief remarks, said that Dela Cruz showed the true sense of a gentlemen. "Whether here at the office or outside, I have never met anyone that holds his composure like him. We would debate here, but you will never see him get up or show action showing anger. He has been held to be a gentleman and that has learned a lot of respect from all of us here."

Torres served with Dela Cruz in the 17th and 18th Legislatures with the latter as the Senate president. "He is a family man, I get to know him in behalf of his family. He would go the extra distance for his love of his family.

"It is a great honor for me to serve in the same legislature. Thank you for allowing him to serve with us. Surely you can walk the streets with your head up high and standing tall because he is a true gentleman and statesman. I will not be here to testify if I don't mean it."

NMC TO PARENTS:

'Encourage HS grads to take advantage of Cash for College'

Northern Marianas College is asking parents of recent high school graduates to encourage their son or daughter to take advantage of the services offered at the upcoming Cash for College workshops on Rota, Saipan, and Tinian.

The aim of the workshop is to assist students and their parents to maximize scholarship opportunities that are available for those seeking a college education at NMC or at other post-secondary institutions.

The Cash for College workshops will be held on Rota, Saipan, and Tinian on the following dates:

■ Jan. 24 & 25: Rota NMC campus, from 10am to 4pm on Jan. 24 and 8am to 12pm on Jan. 25.

■ Jan. 26: Saipan, Buildings N and O, NMC As Terlaje campus, from 9am to 12pm.

■ Feb. 12: Tinian NMC Campus Library, from 10:30am to 2:30pm.

Participants of the workshop will be provided with personal, step-by-step assistance in completing college financial aid forms, focusing especially on forms like the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, and application forms for CNMI Scholarship, Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance (SHEFA) program, and other municipal scholarships.

In addition, the CNMI Scholarship Office and SHEFA program extended their application deadlines for Northern Marianas College students.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Northern Marianas College is asking parents of recent high school graduates to encouraged their son or daughter to take advantage of the services offered at the upcoming Cash for College workshops on Rota, Saipan, and Tinian. For additional information, visit marianas.edu or contact the NMC Financial Aid Office at 237-6792 or email daisy.propst@marianas.edu.

The new deadlines for CNMI Scholarship and SHEFA are:

■ CNMI Scholarship Application: March 1, 2019

■ CNMI Scholarship Supporting Documents: April 15, 2019

■ SHEFA Application Deadline: Feb. 1, 2019

■ SHEFA Supporting Documents: April 12, 2019

Staff members from the college's Office of Admissions and Records will also be present to provide information and assistance with the NMC application process.

Individuals who participate in the Northern Marianas College's upcoming Cash for College workshops will qualify to have their NMC Spring 2019 admission application fee and placement test fees waived. The waiver represents a savings of up to $75.

Although not required, it is recommended that workshop participants bring a valid form of identification (e.g., a valid U.S. passport, copy of valid application for a U.S. passport, birth certificate, or green card), an official transcript from high school (at least three official copies), copy of 2017 and 2018 1040, copy of 2017 and 2018 W-2 (if not filing), and proof of CNMI residency, including proof of continuing residency.

For additional information, visit marianas.edu or contact the NMC Financial Aid Office at 237-6792 or email daisy.propst@marianas.edu. ***(PR)***

DRC transitions to SBA Disaster Loan Outreach Center

On Saturday, Jan. 26, 2019, at 4pm, the Disaster Recovery Center on Saipan will close, but help will still be available for disaster survivors impacted by Typhoon Mangkhut and Super Typhoon Yutu.

Beginning Tuesday, Jan. 29 the Small Business Administration will open a Disaster Loan Outreach Center at the location of the former DRC, the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center, on Beach Road in Susupe. The hours of operation will be from 9am to 6pm, Tuesday through Saturday. The DLOC will be closed on Sundays and Mondays.

At this stage of the recovery process, the emphasis for assistance is to meet the long-term needs of businesses and individuals impacted by Typhoon Mangkhut and Super Typhoon Yutu. SBA customer service representatives will continue to answer questions, explain the application process and help businesses and individuals close their approved disaster loans.

After the DRC closes, survivors whose homes were affected by the typhoons can still check the status of their application, ask questions and learn about the appeals process by logging in to their account at www.DisasterAssistance.gov or calling the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362. Persons who are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech disability and use a TTY may call 800-462-7585. Toll-free numbers are open daily. ***(PR)***

Black Ties & Zories Wish Night on March 1

Make-A-Wish Guam and CNMI's Annual Black Ties & Zories Wish Night is now rescheduled from the original date of Nov. 9, 2018 to March 1, 2019.

Make-A-Wish Guam and CNMI's mission is to fulfill the wishes of every eligible child, as wishes are an integral part of a child's treatment journey. Wishes provide kids hope when they need it most, and research shows they have effects on children's overall well-being and health outcomes.

In fact, wishes have proven physical and emotional benefits that can give children with critical illnesses a higher chance of survival. When a wish is granted, a child replaces fearwith confidence, sadness with joy and anxiety with hope.

Dr. Anup Patel, MD of the Nationwide Children's Hospital (NCH) has recently released a study examining the health care utilization among patients who received a wish and a control group who did not. The study found patients who were granted a wish were more likely to have fewer unplanned hospitality and emergency department visits. Learn more about the study:

https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/newsroom/news-releases/2018/11/wishes-help-keep-

pediatric-patients-out-of-the-hospital

To help fulfill the mission, please join the Black Ties & Zories Wish Night on Friday, March 1, 2019 at the Hyatt Regency Saipan. Complimentary cocktails will be served at 6pm followed by a plated dinner service. Through stories, live entertainment by JJ Concepcion and a special guest, on-site raffles, Best Zories contest, delectable dishes, and good company, guests will surely enjoy a fantastic evening. Pre-purchased tickets for the original Nov. 9, 2018 event will still be honored. Tickets are available at the Hyatt Regency Saipan, Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan and Gold's Gym Saipan. Please call 285-5466, 285-6175 or 285-1168 for more information or email cnmiwish@gmail.com.

The Make-A-Wish Foundation grants the wishes of children with critical illnesses. Founded in 1980 when a group of caring volunteers helped a young boy fulfill his dream of becoming a police officer, the Foundation is one of the world's leading children's charities, with 64 chapters in the United States and its territories. With the help of generous donors and nearly 25,000 volunteers, the Make-A-Wish Foundation grants a wish every 34 minutes and has granted more than 300,000 wishes in the United States since its inception. For more information about the Make-A-Wish Foundation, visit guam.wish.org and discover how you can share the power of a wish®. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building
P.O. Box 501220 CK • Saipan, MP 96950-1220
Telephone: (670) 664-4282 • Facsimile: (670) 235-5131

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to the Open Government Act (1 CMC §9901 *et seq*), the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation ("CUC") Board of Directors hereby informs the general public that the Board will hold a **Special Board meeting** on **Friday, January 25, 2019 at 9:00 a.m.** The meeting will be held at the CUC Conference Room, Room 17, 3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Building to consider the following agenda. Public attendance is welcome.

AGENDA*

I. Preliminary Matters
  A. Call to Order
  B. Roll Call
  C. Reading of the Notice of the Agenda
  D. Adoption of Agenda

II. Public Comments**

III. Emergency Procurement Purchase and Temporary Alternative Power Supply

IV. Executive Session
  A. Discussions of Specific Personnel Contracts and Performance Evaluations

V. Announcements

VI. Adjournment

* Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Agenda maybe modified during the meeting.
** Public comments are limited to 30 minutes and each remark is limited to three minutes. Everyone is welcome to submit written comments.
*** Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Board of Directors may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

COMMONWEALTH LAW REVISION COMMISSION
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS JUDICIARY
HOUSE OF JUSTICE | GUMA HUSTISIA | IIMWAL AWEEWE
P.O. Box 502179, Saipan, MP 96950-2179
https://www.cnmilaw.org
Tel: (670) 236-9820
Fax: (670) 236-9897
cnmilaw@justice.gov.mp

PUBLIC NOTICE

REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, January 30, 2019, 10:00 a.m.
Latte Stone, Kanoa Resort
Susupe, Saipan

Agenda

1. Preliminary Matters
  a. Call to Order and Roll Call
  b. Meeting Notice (Compliance with Open Government Act, 1 CMC § 9901 et seq.)
  c. Final Approval of July 30, 2018 Meeting Minutes
2. Executive Director's Report
  a. Office & Staff Update
  b. Publications – Print & Website: Status, Issues, & Plans
    i. NMI Reporter
    ii. CMC
    iii. NMIAC
    iv. Driver's Handbook
    v. Miscellaneous Projects
  c. FY 2018 and FY 2019 Budget & Expenditures
  d. Sales and Other Reports
3. Old Business
4. New Business
5. Tentative Date for Next Meeting and Adjournment
6. Other Matters

The regular meeting of the Commission will be held at an alternate location due to the closure of Guma' Hustisia.

VEHICLES FOR BID
"AS IS"

2005 NISSAN ALTIMA
2018 TOYOTA YARIS

Last day for bidding is January 31, 2019 at 3:00PM. For more information, please call Loans Department at 235-6260 ext. 123 or 124. The Bank reserves the right to refuse any and all bids.

VEHICLES FOR SALE
"AS IS"

2016 HYUNDAI ACCENT
2017 TOYOTA TACOMA 4X4

Financing available, see staff at Loans Department for details.

Bank of Saipan
Marianas Pride

AMP to improve accessibility, basic visitor services

HAGATNA, Guam—American Memorial Park announced that access is improving at the memorials and picnic areas. National Park Service officials have determined that by using Federal Land and Recreation Enhancement Act funds to immediately bring back maintenance crews to mow and collect trash, the park will be able to restore access for most recreational activities while ensuring the health and safety of our visitors. The maintenance crews will clean restrooms, remove trash, and trim/mow the most heavily visited areas for the safety and enjoyment of our community and our visitors.

Through a series of generous donations by our partner, Pacific Historic Parks, the visitor center and bookstore will continue to be open daily, but will remain on the current schedule of from 9:30am to 4pm. These donations have also enabled the park to continue providing educational programs such as the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Big Read kickoff event on Feb. 2 at 3pm.

"We appreciate the ongoing donations from Pacific Historic Parks," said park superintendent Barbara Alberti. "Their efforts contributed significantly to our ability to maintain access and basic services to American Memorial Park from the beginning of the shutdown. While donations are still funding visitor center activities, we will now use recreation fee revenue to fund our basic maintenance services. We are also thankful for our island community's patience during the past four weeks. We are proud to restore access to our park and appreciate our visitors helping us keep it clean by taking their trash home with them and practicing the Leave No Trace concept."

The superintendent would especially like to thank Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang and his staff for coming to the park last Wednesday and yesterday to remove debris piles from hazard trees cut down after Super Typhoon Yutu. This will allow the park to reopen some of the paths that had been blocked. The park will continue recovery efforts following the resumption of normal government activities

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

American Memorial Park staff mowes the grass at the AMP's Court of Honor.

Although some basic visitor services are being restored, other services may be limited or unavailable during the lapse in appropriations, including ranger talks, issuance of Special Park Use permits, and use of the visitor center theater. Additional information may be available at nps.gov/amme.

Information is subject to change throughout the duration of the federal government shutdown. National Park Service social media and websites may not be monitored or updated regularly and may not reflect current conditions. For updates on the shutdown, please visit www.doi.gov/shutdown. ***(PR)***

Ordnance detonation at Marpi Blow Pit on Jan. 24 and 25

The CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, with the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services in conjunction with Joint Region Marianas-EOD, would like to inform the general public that the U.S. Military Unit will be conducting WWII Live Ordnance Detonation at Saipan Marpi Blow Pit.

The detonation will be on Jan. 24 and 25 from 8am to 12pm.

The general location of this activity will be at Marpi Blow Pit within a 1,000 feet radius on all quadrants to 1,000 feet above sea level.

Authorities would like to inform the general public that the Department of Public Safety will close the Marpi road from 8am to 12pm for the duration of this operation.

Marpi Landfill, Banzai Cliff, Suicide Cliff, and Grotto will be closed for the time period of this operation.

Due to the danger imposed by these activities, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres is strongly advising the general public, especially fishermen, commercial pilots, and marine tour operators, to stay away from these areas during the time and dates indicated.

The cooperation and understanding of the general public is greatly appreciated. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the CNMI Emergency Operation Center- State Warning Point at telephone number (670)237-8000, VHF MARINE CHNL 16, and HF Single Side Band Radio on 5.205.0 for this advisory. ***(PR)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Humanities awards today

The Northern Marianas Humanities Council will be hosting the 21st Governor's Humanities Awards at the Hyatt Regency Saipan's Giovanni's Restaurant today, Jan. 24, starting at 11am. ***(PR)***

I Kumision i Fino' CHamoru meeting tomorrow

Due to extenuating circumstances, the Kumision i Fino' CHamoru yan i Fina'någuen i Historia yan Lina'la Taotao Tano' (I Kumision i Fino' CHamoru) has moved its Saturday, Jan. 26, 2019 meeting to the usual time, tomorrow, Jan. 24, from 12:30pm to 3pm at its Hagatña location, the Garden House at the Plaza de España.

Agenda includes 1. Logistics for the Mina' Dos Fina'che'cho' on Friday, 1/25/19; and, 2. Approval of previous meeting minutes. ***(PR)***

Deadline to register with FEMA Jan. 27

Residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands only have until Jan. 27 to register for federal disaster assistance for damage from Typhoon Mangkhut and Super Typhoon Yutu.

A FEMA registration has a nine-digit number. If you do not have the nine-digit number, you are not registered for federal assistance.

Those who suffered impacts to their primary residences and have not registered with FEMA may do so either of three ways:

- On-line at DisasterAssistance.gov
- Call the FEMA Helpline at 1- (800) 621-3362
- Go to the Disaster Recovery Center (DRC)

The DRC located at the Multi-Purpose Center on Beach Road in Susupe, is open 9am to 6pm Monday through Friday, and 10am to 4pm on Saturday. Closed on Sunday.

The DRC will be closed on Monday, Jan 21, in observance of the Martin Luther King Jr, Holiday.

Please remember, applicants should have the following information at hand:

- Social Security number.
- Address of the damaged primary residence.
- Description of the damage.
- Information about insurance coverage if applicable.
- A current contact telephone number.
- An address where they can receive mail.
- Bank account and routing numbers for direct deposit of funds. ***(PR)***

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

January 24, 2000

HANMI seeks reasonable fee on water chemical monitoring

The Hotel Association of Northern Mariana Islands has asked Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio's assistance in coming up with a plan that will ensure payment of a reasonable fee in connection with the planned chemical monitoring of water systems in the CNMI. In a letter to the governor, HANMI President Ron D. Sablan said the high expense of the testing is very untimely as businesses are suffering due to the slowdown on the island's economy. He reminded the governor that these new arbitrary and unexpected fees" proves the CNMI's unstable investment climate. "We believe that all CNMI residents and visitors deserve clean and healthy drinking water. But DEQ's handlding of these new requirements seems unreasonable," Mr. Sablan said. HANMI also questioned the need for the CNMI to undergo chemical tests for 84 norganic chemicals, 15 inorganic chemicals and other radionuclides considering the immense distance and environmental differences between the Northern Marianas the U.S. mainland.

Tobacco laws deprive youth jobs in retail stores — Teno

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has expressed concern over the restrictive local tobacco laws, saying these have deprived the youth the opportunity to work at retail establishments as they are prohibited from handling and selling tobacco products. He urged the Legislature to review further Public Law 11-75 to amend provisions that will lessen the impact on employment for minors under 18 years old in stores where tobacco products are sold. "This age requirement has significantly decreased the job opportunities for our youth seeking part-time or summer employment," said the governor in a letter to presiding officers of the Legislature.

January 24, 2005

Anatahan eruptions decrease

The volcanic eruptions on Anatahan have somewhat decreased since peaking on Sunday but they remain frequent and strong, according to a joint report issued by the Emergency Management Office and the U.S. Geological Survey.

After subsiding in the past days, the eruption abruptly changed and intensified, peaking at about 7am Sunday morning, based on reports of airline pilots ash, who described ash clouds rising up to 10,000 to 15,000 feet. Seismicity indicates that the explosions decreased but remain frequent and strong, EMO and USGS said. The third historical eruption of Anatahan began on Jan. 5 preceded by two days of small long-period earthquakes and a day of harmonic tremor.

'Tsunami may lead garment buyers to Saipan"

The Department of Finance remains confident that garment user fee collections this year would remain "near or at the same level" as in previous fiscal years despite the worldwide lifting of quota restrictions. For one, Finance Secretary Fermin Atalig said that garment sales in the CNMI may not dramatically drop this year as buyers from tsunami-stricken areas in Asia could shift to Saipan. He cited that some Sri Lanka factories would not be able to meet their orders this year. It must be noted, though, that the tsunamis hit coastal areas and islands and not major cities, such as Colombo in Sri Lanka and Bangkok in Thailand, where most garment factories are located. There have been no reports of manufacturing activities in those countries being affected by the tsunamis.

January 24, 2006

Senate supports creation of police reserve force

The Senate wants civilian volunteers to augment the current police force. The lawmakers recently voted unanimously to pass Senate Bill 15-27, which would establish a civilian volunteer police reserve unit to assist the Department of Public Safety. The bill now goes to the House of Representatives. "The Legislature, therefore, finds that it would be prudent to establish a Civilian Volunteer Police Reserve Unit to allow additional personnel to be available to assist [DPS] in addressing any such potential crisis," it added. According to the bill, the civilian police unit will be on an entirely voluntary basis. Members will serve as backup personnel and will receive training on a regular basis.

'Reactivate Pozzolan Task Force'

The transition committee for the Marianas Public Lands Authority is pushing for the reactivation of the Pozzolan Task Force, amid plans by a private joint venture to begin exporting pozzolan from Pagan this year. MPLA transition sub-committee chair Howard I. Macaranas said the MPLA board "should get their act together and reactivate" the task force, which could make recommendations for the establishment of a new industry for the Commonwealth. "This could assist in improving our dwindling economy," Macaranas said in the committee's report, which was submitted to Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Gov. Timothy P. Villagomez.

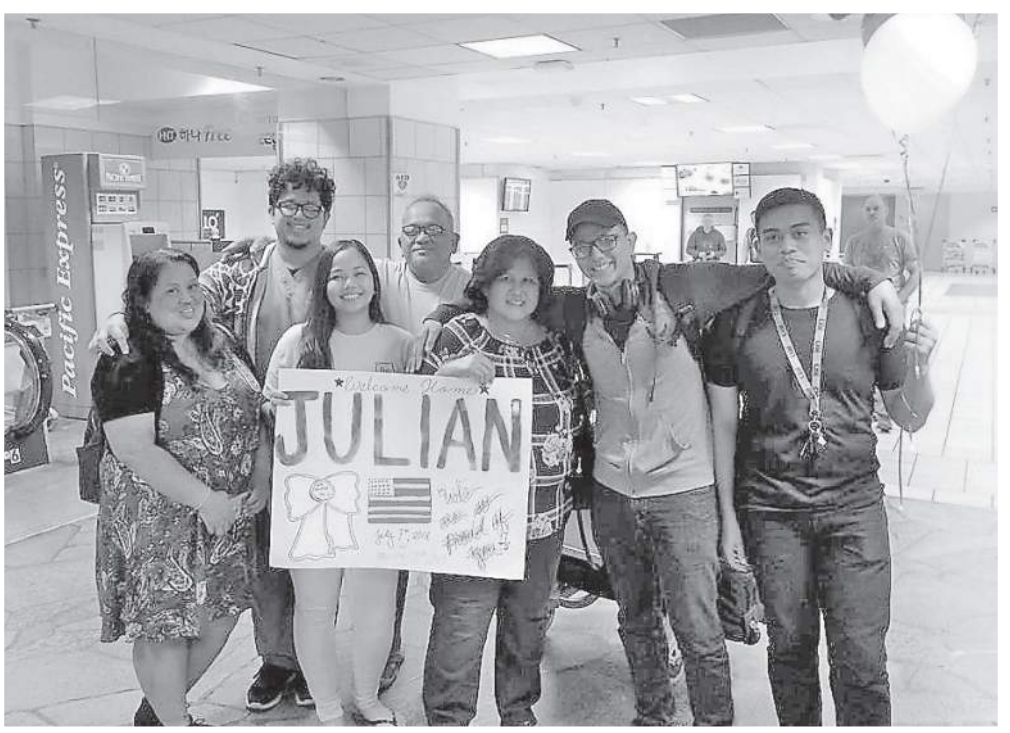
Another Guam Guard Airman returns home from deployment

An Airman, from the Guam Air National Guard (GUANG)'s 254th Red Horse Squadron (254RHS), returned home Sunday evening, January 20th, from a deployment in support of Operation Freedom Sentinel.

Senior Airman Julian Taimanao, a Water and Fuel Systems Maintenance Apprentice, supported the 146th Civil Engineer Squadron (146CES) from the Channel Islands Air National Guard Station, Port Hueneme, California, while deployed to Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar, in support of the U.S. Air Force Central Command's Area of Operations. ***(PR)***

MAJ. JOSEPHINE BLAS, PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER, GUAM NATIONAL GUARD

Senior Airman Julian Taimanao, at front center, from the Guam Air National Guard's 254th Red Horse Squadron, poses with leadership and other Airmen, after his arrival on Sunday, Jan. 20, after returning from a deployment in support of Operation Freedom Sentinel.



MAJ. JOSEPHINE BLAS, PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER, GUAM NATIONAL GUARD

Senior Airman Julian Taimanao, at front center, from the Guam Air National Guard's 254th Red Horse Squadron, poses with other Airmen, after his arrival on Sunday, Jan. 20, after returning from a deployment in support of Operation Freedom Sentinel.

MAJ. JOSEPHINE BLAS, PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER, GUAM NATIONAL GUARD

Senior Airman Julian Taimanao, second from right, from the Guam Air National Guard's 254th Red Horse Squadron, poses with family members, after his arrival on Sunday, Jan. 20, after returning from a deployment in support of Operation Freedom Sentinel.

IN PREPARATION FOR GENEVA HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL MEETING

Vanuatu holds mock Universal Periodic Review

PORT VILA, Vanuatu— Nineteen participants from the Vanuatu government and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) took part in a mock Universal Periodic Review (UPR) session in Port Vila. The Vanuatu government will be undergoing their third UPR at the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva on Jan. 24, 2019, where the nations performance in protecting and promoting human rights, and the progress made in implementing recommendations from its previews review will be assessed.

The two-day mock session was facilitated by the Pacific Community's (SPC) Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) on Jan. 17-18 in collaboration with the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG). The session was held as part of the U.K.-funded Pacific Commonwealth Equality Project. The session was attended by the Minister for Justice, Don Ken, who will lead a ministerial delegation to Geneva for the UPR process.

Setariki Waqanitoga, senior policy advisor at the Ministry of Justice in Vanuatu, expressed his satisfaction with the session as a means to build confidence for the upcoming meetings in Geneva saying, "The mock human rights reporting session has been very helpful in that it has given the Vanuatu government delegation a feel of the atmosphere in Geneva at the Human Rights Council as we prepare for our third Universal Periodic Review."

Director general of the Ministry of Justice and Community Services and head of National Human Rights Committee, Dorosday Kenneth, echoed this sentiment comments made after the conclusion of the session. "The mock session provided the delegation with the opportunity to understand the scope of what is expected in Geneva and it has also allowed them the chance to understand what UPR is as an international forum to openly discuss the issues of human rights in the country."

Kenneth added, "The high attendance by representatives of the different government sectors at this mock session indicates the Vanuatu government's commitment to implementing human rights recommendations across all divisions."

The session in Vanuatu is part of RRRT's wider ongoing work in Pacific to support countries engagement in the UPR processes. Miles Young, director of RRRT, highlighted the importance of these sessions for the region.

"Mock sessions are a vital part of preparation for state delegations as it gives them a chance to rehearse their answers and receive critical feedback on their presentation and responses. The session which has concluded in Vanuatu will help ensure the dialogue in Geneva is richer, leading to more relevant recommendations and increased impact on the ground." ***(PR)***

UOG Cooperative Extension workshops teach management of SNAP benefits

University of Guam Cooperative Extension & Outreach reminds Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program participants to budget their next month's benefits wisely and to avail of free workshops on food and finance management within its SNAP-Ed Program. This comes following an announcement from the Department of Public Health & Social Services that SNAP recipients will receive their February benefits two weeks early — and thus must manage the month's benefits over a longer period — to avoid issue with the federal government shutdown.

"The situation with the federal shutdown has unfortunately affected those who can least afford it, but we welcome all to our education programs," said Associate Dean/Director Sereana Howard Dresbach of Cooperative Extension & Outreach. "We are providing opportunities for family budgeting, food choices, food preparation and safety, as well as helping people understand how to produce their own sources of food. We hope all citizens will attend these useful programs."

The SNAP-Ed Program benefits persons eligible for SNAP by helping them make healthy choices within a limited budget and encouraging them to live active lifestyles. The program regularly offers free workshops on the topics of food planning, shopping, and cooking.

Workshops are held as there is demand. The Cooperative Extension & Outreach office encourages interested parties to contact SNAP-Ed Coordinator Rynette Perez about upcoming workshops. She may be reached at (671) 735-2020 or perezrc@triton.uog.edu.

"SNAP-Ed is a mobile classroom that can go where our island residents need us most, especially when transportation can be a barrier," Perez said. "Participants will have opportunities to play games, share ideas and experiences, test out healthy, local recipes, and learn to practice the skills to budget and stretch their food dollars through hands-on activities."

For resources and more information on the program, visit https://cnas-re.uog.edu.

UoG's Cooperative Extension & Outreach program works to increase collaborations between the public and government agencies, private entities, and non-governmental organizations. Its partnerships foster its mission of extending research-based knowledge through outreach education programs for positive engagement of individuals and communities. It specializes in agriculture and natural resources, consumer and family sciences, 4-H youth development, and community development. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Katrina Camacho, an extension assistant II with the University of Guam Cooperative Extension & Outreach program, teaches a lesson on the food groups to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program recipients.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXIX, Issue No. 16

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
editor@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

The Associated Press Pacific Islands News Association

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KIRK

EDITORIAL

The case against 70 percent

In what might have been an offhand comment, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, a Democrat newly elected to the House of Representatives, told an interviewer that a marginal income tax of 70 percent might make sense for people earning more than $10 million a year. The idea is attracting attention, and at least one poll suggests it might be popular. The current top rate on earned income, not counting Medicare taxes, is 37 percent. Could it really make sense to almost double it?

The idea is unwise — but worth discussing.

Some economists, including respected authorities on taxes and public finance, say 70 percent could be about right. Their logic is simple. They say taking money from the rich to give to the poor makes society as a whole better off. And the evidence suggests a top rate of 70 percent on the highest incomes would be fiscally productive — meaning not so high that the disincentive to effort and enterprise would cause the government to raise less money than with a lower rate.

The principle that taxes should be progressive — raising proportionally more revenue from the rich than from people of more modest means — is almost universally accepted as fair. The current U.S. tax system is already quite progressive, and it could be made more so by closing loopholes that give the rich advantages. Most voters would probably regard reforms of that kind as making the system fairer still.

However, those very loopholes cause a big problem for high top rates. Warren Buffett famously once said his secretary faced a tax rate higher than his. The reason is that most of Buffett's income is in the form of capital gains, which are taxed at a lower rate. Without comprehensive tax reform, introducing a top rate of 70 percent, or anything close, would vastly increase the profit to be made from lawful tax avoidance, including arrangements that recast income in the form of capital gains, a maneuver that's especially appealing to those making more than $10 million a year. (While it's true that top rates in the U.S. used to run even higher than 70 percent, it's also true that these taxes raised relatively little additional revenue for the government.)

The U.S. tax code offers countless opportunities for avoidance. Taking this into account, and bearing in mind that over the long term very high top rates would discourage effort and enterprise more severely than most short-term estimates suggest, the rate that gathers most revenue from the rich is probably a lot lower than 70 percent, and maybe not much higher than the current rate.

Why not do both — broaden the tax base by bringing more kinds of income and consumption into consideration, eliminate loopholes, and then push the top rate as far as it can go? Because although most Americans want the rich to pay their fair share, few would regard a deliberate policy of bleeding the successful to the maximum extent possible as either fair or wise. And they'd be right. It's hardly an accident that the U.S. is the world's most innovative economy: This is a country that, more than most, admires enterprise and risk-taking, and deems success in business as worthy of reward.

In years ahead, U.S. taxes will need to rise. The government is committed to outlays on Social Security and other programs that far exceed projected revenues. Much additional new spending, especially on efforts addressed to energy and climate change, will also be needed — and will

See THE CASE on Next Page

A way to fight the electoral college

By JOSEPH J. ELLIS
Los Angeles Times

Joseph J. Ellis' latest book is "American Dialogue: The Founders and Us."

The electoral college was an unwanted child from the beginning. Born in Philadelphia in mid-August 1787, when most delegates to the Constitutional Convention were eager to escape the heat and humidity and go home, it was the fruit of a compromise between the two warring factions at the convention: those who wished to revise the Articles of Confederation and retain sovereignty in the states, and those who wished to replace the articles by shifting sovereignty to a fully empowered national government. In effect, should the United States remain a confederation or become a nation-sized republic?

There was no consensus on an answer to that question, and the electoral college accurately reflected the impasse. Neither side was happy with the result. James Madison, at this stage of his career an ardent nationalist, left Philadelphia in September believing that he had failed. Later canonized as the Father of the Constitution, Madison confided to friends that the document he had just signed was fatally flawed because the principle of state sovereignty survived in two places, the Senate (where small states get the same vote as big states) and the electoral college (where votes again aren't apportioned by population only). Although it began "We the people," the Constitution did not really mean those words, Madison said, and for that reason, would not last for long.

More than two centuries later, Madison's prediction has long since died a natural death. In fact, the U.S. Constitution became the political model for all aspiring liberal governments in the modern era, with one glaring exception: No country in the world adopted the electoral college.

Foreign coverage of American presidential elections can resemble Marx Brothers comedy skits, mocking the distinction between voters and electors. (One French commentator joked that the distinction resembled the medieval difference between equants and epicycles in the Ptolemaic universe.) The recent election of Donald Trump, who won the presidency with a smaller percentage of the popular vote than Mitt Romney did in losing it, generated some combination of bewilderment and outrage through a traumatized electorate.

All of which rises to an obvious question: If the framers who created the electoral college regarded it as an ugly compromise; if no one else in the world copies it, admires it or understands it; if its recent product is the most unqualified and embarrassing president in American history; why has it not followed the same fate as powdered wigs and the property qualification to vote?

The short answer is that we're stuck with it. The longer version is that the framers deliberately made it difficult to amend the Constitution, requiring a two-thirds vote in both houses of Congress and a three-quarters supermajority of all the states. Ironically, the electoral college resists replacement for the same reason it needs to be replaced: the unrepresentative power of states with small populations. Any proposed constitutional amendment must first negotiate the gantlet in the Senate, where the Dakotas, with less than half the population of Los Angeles, control twice the votes of California. It must then achieve a supermajority among the 50 states, where Vermont and Rhode Island have the same clout as New York or Pennsylvania. Think of it as the constitutional version of a Catch-22.

For these reasons, all previous attempts to abolish the electoral college recall the tale of Sisyphus rolling the boulder up a hill. There are sound reasons to conclude that a constitutional amendment making presidential elections more democratic is and always will be a bridge too far.

On the other hand, Madison and a small coterie of his colleagues, chiefly George Washington, Alexander Hamilton and John Jay, decided to cross just such a bridge in 1787. In the face of implacable opposition, they somehow performed the impossible task of replacing the Articles of Confederation with the Constitution. Historians often call it the miracle at Philadelphia.

Let me suggest that, after Trump's election, we occupy an opportune moment to try our own hands at making a miracle. Popular frustrations are ripe for harvesting during the election of 2020, which needs to become a referendum not just on Trump's presidency, but also on the electoral college that, more than Russian hackers, made it possible.

All presidential candidates from both parties should be required to answer the following question: "Do you favor replacing the electoral college with the direct popular election of the president?" Throughout the primary season, "We the People" banners and T-shirts should appear at Democratic and Republican rallies, as well as anywhere citizens gather to express themselves on the issues at stake in the campaign. The goal is to generate and fully expose an overwhelming mandate for reform.

Meanwhile, at the state level, a complementary movement, let's call it Electors for Democracy, can recruit and support electors who pledge to cast their votes for whoever wins the national

See COLLEGE on Next Page

Enough posturing already. End the shutdown and talk like grownups

By JON HEALEY
Los Angeles Times

President Donald Trump wants to negotiate a deal over border security before reopening the government. Congressional Democrats, many of whom support tougher border security measures and some of whom even support a bigger, more extensive wall on the southern border, won't negotiate with Trump on border security until the government reopens.

He's mostly wrong, they're mostly right.

Congress and the president have fought over specific spending projects (often in the Defense Department budget) multiple times over the years, and sometimes those fights have resulted in the lights going out in parts of the federal government. That's the inevitable result of a Constitution that gives Congress exclusive power to appropriate but the president the power to veto appropriations bills.

The issue here is how much of the government should be paralyzed by this fight. Nine departments and dozens of agencies have been idled — they were the ones clumped together in a temporary funding bill that elapsed Dec. 21. Their workers and contractors have gone more than a month without pay, the economy more than a month without their spending, and the public more than a month without their services.

Democrats want to fund eight of those departments and most of the agencies through the end of the fiscal year, while providing temporary funding to the Department of Homeland Security — the one in charge of border security — to keep the pressure on lawmakers to hammer out a deal with Trump on the wall.

That's not just reasonable, it's the only approach that makes sense for Congress in the long run — for the sake of their institution, not just government employees, contractors and taxpayers. If presidents are allowed to take agencies hostage when their funding is not in dispute, then the president will have an incentive — and leverage — to use spending bills continually to extract concessions on … anything.

It doesn't take much imagination to see where this could lead (A shutdown over single payer! Or universal background checks! Or an end to the special counsel's funding!). Both parties ought to be united in opposition to that kind of tactic.

Instead, Washington seems to be caught in a spin cycle over whether the president's offer to freeze deportations for three years on Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival enrollees and non-citizens under Temporary Protected Status was good enough, or maybe the starting point for earnest negotiations. It may be the latter, but only after Trump agrees to stop the wasteful, record-setting (and not in a good way) shutdown.

The GOP's race issue

By RICH BENJAMIN
Los Angeles Times

Rich Benjamin, author of "Searching for Whitopia: An Improbable Journey to the Heart of White America," is at work on a new book.

House Republicans bluntly snubbed Rep. Steve King after his latest racist musing, relieving the Iowan of his congressional committee posts and scrambling to pass a resolution condemning white nationalism.

Ostracizing their outrageous colleague provided a satisfying outlet for Republicans. They could appear to tackle their race problem while punting the harder, more pointed matter: taking a stance on the president's racism and figuring out what to do about the mounting racial extremism among their base.

King's censure is a Band-Aid for a worsening lesion. For conservatives, years of conflicting racial dogmas are coming home to roost. The Republican congressional class just inaugurated has about 90 percent white men. Especially photographed next to their Democratic counterparts, they are not exactly a good banner ad for future growth.

Can it really have been just one Republican president ago when the GOP devised a "big-tent campaign" to lure black voters, called "If You Give Us a Chance, We'll Give You a Choice"? Ken Mehlman, then-GOP chair, apologized to the NAACP national convention at the time for the party's history of exploiting racial tension to court white voters.

"Republicans recognize they're losing the voters of color," advised an infamous internal party memo from 2013. "This priority needs to be a continual effort that affects every facet of our party's activities, including our messaging, strategy, outreach, and budget."

Many conservatives prefer to ignore race altogether, adopting a kind of colorblind optimism. They see their benign neglect as a principled stance. Columnist George Will, a conservative Trump foe and colorblind idealist, has upbraided "race-mongering diversity tinkerers." Those folks, he says, "have an ideological stake in preventing America from achieving 'a colorblind mentality.'" And Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. has scolded the government for its "sordid business" of "divvying us up by race."

"The way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to stop discriminating on the basis of race," Roberts famously stated in a prominent desegregation case.

But if you look more closely, the colorblind mantra favors the social and material interests of the GOP's white base. The mantra's "benign neglect" of demonstrable racial inequality — in policing, sentencing, predatory lending, public education, for example — is like a comfy prophylactic: That dogma protects the party from any messy discussion or needed action to address those inequalities, by conveniently dismissing race awareness as grievance and propping up the status quo.

Ivanka Trump, a self-declared moderate, praised her father as "colorblind" and "gender-neutral" when she introduced him at their party convention in 2016. That proposition seemed plausible to Republicans at the time, but would make most laugh today. That's because where race is concerned, Trump now sounds like the weird love child of George Wallace, Archie Bunker and Foghorn Leghorn.

In word and action, the man in the White House undercuts both party outlooks — big-tent opportunism and colorblind optimism — alongside his political groupies.

Their strategic racism feeds white anxiety, which brings in donor money and shores up the base. Trump intentionally uses his bully pulpit to stick up for white nationalists, cast nonwhite immigrants as "an infestation," ban nonwhite immigrants from so-called "shithole countries," and more.

Trump recently thundered that unless his wall is built, "the United States, as we have known it, is going to cease to exist," channeling white nationalist Pat Buchanan, who recently urged the president to declare an emergency because "the more multiracial, multiethnic, multicultural, multilingual America becomes — the less it looks like Ronald Reagan's America."

How can a party that professes to "transcend" race woo a broad spectrum of voters while keeping its white base?

The party of Lincoln is mounting aggressive efforts to make society "colorblind" in some instances (college admissions, job hiring, public schooling), but not in others (stop-and-frisk policing, immigration access, Latinx scapegoating and gerrymandering).

When the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. dreamed that all people be judged by the content of their character, he didn't mean for his words to be repurposed as horse blinders to inequality. With blistering social divisions, and increasingly obvious military and natural disaster threats, King's message should resonate more urgently to conservatives: "We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools."

An addled GOP and conservative movement are battling over three approaches to race — big-tent idealism, colorblind delusion and strategic racism. For now, strategic racism is winning out.

It is both a political head fake and an ideological stain for Republicans to denounce a small-state legislator but not their party leader.

Banishing King the political hack sounds like a slam-dunk no-brainer for Republicans, but it doesn't begin to solve the party's ubiquitous, gaping race problem.

COLLEGE

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popular vote. (An organized effort along these lines is already underway in several states.) There is nothing in the Constitution that requires an elector to vote for the winner in his or her state, a loophole that might offer a way around the amendment impasse. We shall see. The debate it generates will make the effort itself worthwhile.

There are undoubtedly other legal and political approaches that will occur to more imaginative advocates of electoral reform once the dialogue gets going. We should be poised to try anything that works. Upending the electoral college might very well take years, but the great debate must begin now. The opportunity is ripe, the problem is serious, the solution is obvious, and, for the faint of heart, Madison is up there cheering us along.

THE CASE

From Page 10

need to be paid for.

Tax reform that broadens the base and closes loopholes should be a main part of the fiscal strategy for dealing with this challenge — and, done right, these changes would also make the tax code more progressive. As part of this larger effort, a moderate increase in the top marginal rate should not be seen as out of bounds. But to go further and proclaim an explicit policy of soaking the rich would be unjust and, in the end, counterproductive.

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C.O.G.

LITERARY NOOK

By JOEY 'PEPE BATBON' CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey "Pepe Batbon" Connolly is a retired teacher and has been named a poet laureate of Tinian. He has taught English in CNMI public schools for the past 30 years. He has also taught in Alaska, New Orleans, and Las Vegas.

IN THE TRUMP MACHINE—CRACKS SEEN

"Consciousness Of Guilt is a concept that means a person is aware of the fact that they are guilty of committing a crime. In the context of the law, actions that display consciousness of guilt can be used asevidence against a defendant in a court of law."

Consciousness of guilt Trump built
shifting stories denial after denial
cogs in the wheel of Trumpian tyranny
are out of kilter now our country has
more than 7,000 lies and 45 can't remember
which ones to filter one by one
cogs around the hub have begun to go awry
lie after lie after lie after lie...
from legal beagles to military eagles
yellow journalism newspapers
right wing radio profiles
money bought policy shapers
Steele dossier contents slowly leaking out
leaving Potus exposed no doubt
cogs in the machine are being sabotaged
every single time 45 puts his foot
in his mouth his lies no surprise.

TRUMPTY DUMPTY DESCRIPTORS A TO Z

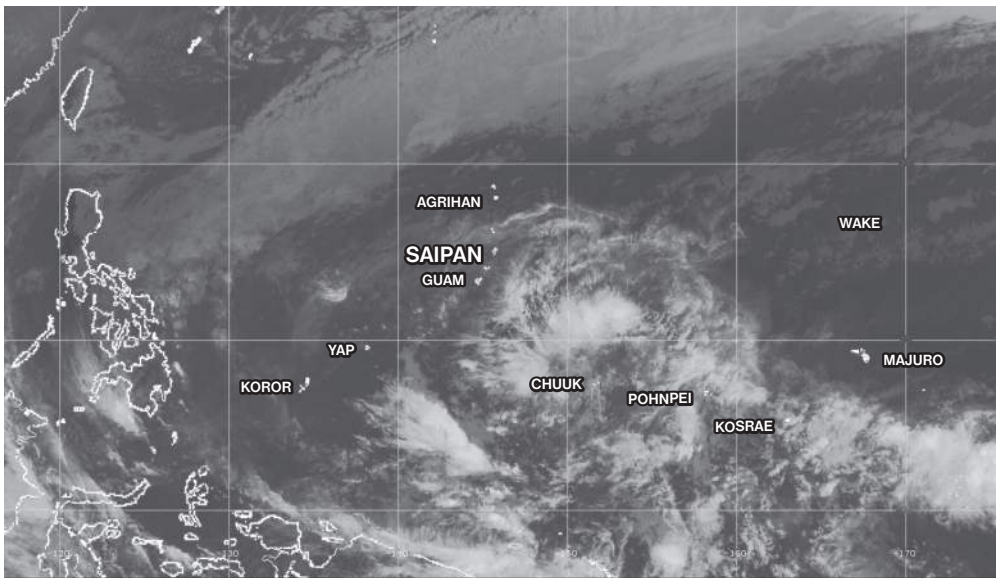
Look at Trumpty Dumpty from A to Z what we see
Arse, Bombastic, Crude comments about women
Deluded, Egregious, Foolish when in a childish mood
Greedy, Hypocritical, Ignorant by choice about much
Jerk, Kind of nutty, Lewd, stand in for Moliere's Miser
Nitwit, Officious, and Pathetically out of touch
Querulous, Ridiculous, in secret love life Sinful
Tweets filled with lies and hypocrisy,
Unglued, Vacuous, Wanton and needy,
some comments and actions on the X-rated list
Yikes! operates using preadolescent psychology
Zenophobic anti-immigrant fear as a policy.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	SUNDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly sunny with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers. Breezy monday.
87° 77°	87° 77°	87° 77°	88° 77°	87° 77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 9:01 AM, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2019

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Shear line fragment continues to spawn shower activity, isolated at a minimum. Therefore upped the slight chance wording to isolated and raised the PoP to 20 by dragging the grids for tomorrow back into today. It is not certain when the beach hazard posed by the washing up of Portuguese Man-o-war will end. It seems to be trending downward and the winds are dying down, which was probably the source of all this. Therefore the current ending time of Thursday afternoon seems like a good guess at this point. Otherwise, the weather will be rather quiet the rest of this week. Early next week, another shear line could make weather a little excitable again, with breezy conditions, scattered showers, and possible high surf/small craft advisories.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Showers	85° / 76°
Palau	Thunderstorms	83° / 78°
Yap	Thunderstorms	84° / 79°
Chuuk	Cloudy	84° / 79°
Pohnpei	Cloudy	85° / 79°
Kosrae	Cloudy	85° / 79°
Majuro	Cloudy	85° / 80°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	72° / 63°
Beijing	Sunny	43° / 18°
Hong Kong	Sunny	70° / 59°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	83° / 67°
London	Partly Cloudy	43° / 34°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	75° / 50°
Manila	Mostly Cloudy	88° / 75°
Melbourne	Windy	102° / 66°
Miami	Windy	78° / 59°
New York	Rain	52° / 30°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	46° / 37°
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	37° / 28°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	48° / 28°
Rome	Showers	54° / 41°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	49° / 31°
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	60° / 48°
Seoul	Sunny	37° / 19°
Tokyo	Mostly Cloudy	46° / 34°
Washington, DC	Rain	53° / 30°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
3:58 AM	LOW TIDE	-0.55
10:48 AM	HIGH TIDE	2.10
4:38 PM	LOW TIDE	0.94
9:38 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.95

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:47 AM	6:10 PM
Friday	6:47 AM	6:11 PM
Saturday	6:46 AM	6:11 PM
Sunday	6:46 AM	6:12 PM
Monday	6:46 AM	6:12 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	9:16 AM	9:24 PM
Friday	-	10:04 AM	10:22 PM
Saturday	-	10:49 AM	11:18 PM
Sunday	-	11:32 AM	-
Monday	12:13 AM	12:15 PM	-

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 21, 2019

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily
UA105	6:25pm	7:05pm	2, 4

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:15am	6:30am	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3403	4:35am	8:25am	Daily
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:30am	11:00am	1
JD396	4:50pm	7:55pm	4

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:30am	7:55am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:15am	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA117/183	9:15am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA117/193	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA105/183	4:45pm	9:40pm	2 via GUM
UA105/183	4:45pm	9:50pm	4 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7
UA117/159	9:15am	11:00pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via GUM
UA105/159	4:45pm	11:00pm	2, 4 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA104	4:50pm	5:31pm	2, 4

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:35pm	2:00am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3452	10:05pm	2:00am+1	1

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:05am	3:30pm	4
JD395	9:35pm	5:00am+1	7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:55pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:40pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA182/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
PR110/UA174	10:05pm	8:11am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/174	10:30pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:15pm	12:15am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/174	11:45pm	8:11am+1	2, 4 via GUM
UA116/174	11:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

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SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

China demands US drop Huawei extradition request with Canada

BEIJING (AP)—China on Tuesday demanded the U.S. drop a request that Canada extradite a top executive of the tech giant Huawei, shifting blame to Washington in a case that has severely damaged Beijing's relations with Ottawa.

Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said Meng Wanzhou's case was out of the ordinary and Canada's extradition treaty with the U.S. infringed on the "safety and legitimate rights and interests of Chinese citizens."

Hua said China demands that the U.S. withdraw the arrest warrant against Meng and "not make a formal extradition request to the Canadian side." She is wanted for allegedly lying to banks as part of an effort to evade sanctions on Iran.

Hua's remarks came after more than 100 academics and former diplomats signed a letter calling on China to release two Canadians detained in apparent retaliation for Meng's arrest.

In this Jan. 9, 2019, photo, a security guard stands near the Huawei company logo during a new product launching event in Beijing. AP

They also follow a report by the Canadian newspaper Globe and Mail that the U.S. plans to formally request Meng's extradition to face charges that she committed fraud by misleading banks about Huawei's business dealings in Iran.

The U.S. Justice Department said it is continuing to pursue Meng's extradition and would meet any deadlines set under the extradition treaty between the U.S. and Canada. In a statement, the Justice Department thanked Canadian authorities for their "support in our mutual efforts to enforce the rule of law."

China detained former Canadian diplomat Michael Kovrig and Canadian entrepreneur Michael Spavor on Dec. 10 in an apparent attempt to pressure Canada to release Meng, who was arrested Dec. 1 at the request of U.S. authorities.

Meng is Huawei's chief financial officer and the daughter of its founder, Ren Zhengfei. Huawei has close ties to China's military and is considered one of the country's most successful international enterprises, operating in the high-tech sphere where China hopes to establish dominance.

The letter signed by academics and former diplomats said the arrests of the two will lead to "less dialogue and greater distrust, and undermine efforts to manage disagreements and identify common ground. Both China and the rest of the world will be worse off as a result."

More than 20 diplomats from seven countries and more than 100 scholars and academics from 19 countries signed.

Meng is living under house arrest in her Vancouver mansion while her case is under deliberation. Kovrig and Spavor are being held in Chinese jails and have yet to be granted access to lawyers, according to those who have contact with them.

The United States and other Western countries have broader fears that Huawei technology—particularly its hardware for mobile networks—could let the Chinese government listen in. Several countries, including the United States, have restricted purchases of Huawei equipment.

Huawei Chairman Liang Hua said critics need to back up their allegations.

"If they believe there's a backdoor, they should offer evidence to prove it," he told reporters on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland.

US prosecutors: Bribes used to hide Russian kickback scheme

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — A businessman accused of defrauding the Russian military through a $150 million kickback scheme thwarted a criminal investigation in his home country by paying off authorities there, U.S. prosecutors said in a recent court filing.

Leonid Teyf is being prosecuted in the U.S. on charges that he illegally stashed millions in domestic banks and plotted to kill a man suspected of having an affair with his wife. Prosecutors' arguments that Teyf is a flight risk helped persuade a North Carolina-based federal judge to order Tuesday that the 57-year-old remain jailed pending trial.

"Teyf operates in a covert manner, has people who will do his bidding, has family and property in multiple foreign countries, has extensive funds, has used these funds to bribe foreign officials," prosecutors wrote in the filing Friday. It added that Teyf "is able to influence law enforcement in Russia."

The written arguments provide new details on the unusual case centering on a man who had lived a lavish life of expensive artwork and luxury cars in a mansion along a Raleigh golf course. Prosecutors have previously said that Teyf used his position as an executive with a military supplier to extract kickbacks from subcontractors seeking to do business with Russia's armed forces.

Teyf's lawyers have said the charges against their client are based on questionable legal theories, and argue that chronic health problems support his request to be released pending trial. They note their client has lived in the U.S. for nearly a decade without a criminal record, writing that: "detention of Mr. Teyf does not make anyone safer."

But prosecutors argue that he has a history of violent threats, along with the means and incentive to flee. A confidential source told authorities that Teyf had asked the person to "'take care' of someone or put them in a hospital," according to prosecutors, who wrote last week that he had wanted to harm an employee suspected of stealing and another person to whom Teyf owed money.

Pelosi works her health care strategy from the ground up

WASHINGTON (AP)—House Speaker Nancy Pelosi is laying out her strategy on health care and first up is improvements to "Obamacare" and legislation to lower prescription drug costs. "Medicare for all" will get hearings.

Pelosi and President Donald Trump have been sounding similar themes about the need to address the high drug costs. But her plans to broaden financial help for health insurance through the Affordable Care Act are unlikely to find takers among Republicans.

Either way, Democrats believe voters gave them a mandate on health care in the midterm elections that returned the House to their control.

Pushing her agenda, Pelosi is working from the ground up through major House committees. Her relationships with powerful chairmen and subcommittee chairs stretch back years. She's "playing chess on three boards at once," said Jim McDermott, a former Democratic congressman from Washington state, who predicts Pelosi's most difficult challenge will be "herding new members" impatient for sweeping changes.

Responding to written questions from The Associated Press, Pelosi called the ACA "a pillar of health and financial security," comparing it to Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security. "Democrats have the opportunity not only to reverse the years of Republicans' health care sabotage, but to update and improve the Affordable Care Act to further lower families' premiums and out-of-pocket costs, and expand coverage."

Legislation from Energy and Commerce Chairman Frank Pallone, D-N.J., Ways and Means Chairman Richard Neal, D-Mass., and Workforce and Education Chairman Bobby Scott, D-Va., would broaden the number of people who can get financial assistance with their premiums under the Obama health law, and undo the "family glitch" that prevents some from qualifying for subsidies. It would also restore the HealthCare.gov advertising budget slashed by Trump and block some of his administration's health insurance alternatives.

Those issues are separate from legal questions raised by ongoing Republican litigation to overturn the health law. The Democratic-led House has voted to intervene in the court case to defend the law.

The 2010 health law belonged as much to Pelosi as to former President Barack Obama, said McDermott. "She's taking 'Obamacare' and very carefully figuring out where you have to support it," he said.

The House ACA package has little chance as a stand-alone bill. But parts of it could become bargaining chips when Congress considers major budget legislation.

On prescription drugs, Trump and the Democrats are occupying some of the same rhetorical territory, an unusual circumstance that could bring about unexpected results.

Both say Americans shouldn't have to keep paying more for medications than consumers in other economically advanced countries where governments regulate prices.

The Trump administration has designed an experiment to apply international pricing to Medicare "Part B" drugs administered in doctors' offices.

Pelosi wants to expand price relief to retail pharmacy drugs that seniors purchase through Medicare's "Part D" prescription drug benefit, a much bigger move. A bill introduced by leading Democrats would authorize Medicare to negotiate directly with drug companies using international prices as a fallback.

"President Trump said he'd 'negotiate like crazy' to bring down Medicare prescription drug prices, and since the midterm election he's spoken about working with Democrats," Pelosi wrote to AP. "We have an opportunity to enact the tough legislative negotiating authority needed to actually lower prescription drug prices for consumers."

One of the top Senate Republicans on health care says he's not inclined to do that. Finance Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley of Iowa says having private insurers negotiate with drug companies has worked.

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
24,404.48	2,632.90	7,020.36
-301.87	-37.81	-136.87
[-1.22%]	[-1.42%]	[-1.91%]

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	1.4018	Hong Kong Dollar	7.8487	Russian Ruble	66.4462
British Pound	0.7741	Indian Rupee	71.1410	Singapore Dollar	1.3600
Canadian Dollar	1.3329	Japanese Yen	109.4100	South Korean Won	1,130.20
Chinese Yuan	6.8029	Malaysian Ringgit	4.1309	Swiss Franc	0.9972
Euro	0.8801	New Zealand Dollar	1.4868	Taiwan Dollar	30.8873
		Philippine Peso	52.8166	Thailand Baht	31.7547

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Nation

Tentative deal reached to end Los Angeles teachers strike

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A crowd of teachers roared its approval after a tentative deal was announced Tuesday between Los Angeles school officials and the union that will allow educators to return to classrooms after a six-day strike in the nation's second-largest district.

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, accompanied by leaders of United Teachers Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Unified School District, announced the agreement at City Hall a few hours after a 21-hour bargaining session ended before dawn.

"I'm proud to announce that, pending approval by the teachers represented by UTLA and educational professionals and this Board of Education, we have an agreement that will allow our teachers to go back to work on their campuses tomorrow," Garcetti said.

Union President Alex Caputo-Pearl said the 30,000 members would vote later Tuesday, and he expected approval. A union summary of the agreement called it "historic" and urged teachers to vote yes to ratify. Educators met with UTLA representatives to familiarize themselves with the details before casting ballots.

It wasn't clear when the vote results would be known, but teachers were expected to be back at work on Wednesday.

The deal was broadly described by officials at the news conference as including a 6 percent pay hike and a commitment to reduce class sizes over four years.

Specifics provided later by the district and the union included the addition of more than 600 nursing positions over the next three school years. Additional counselors and librarians were also part of the increase in support staff.

Marianne O'Brien said the need for additional support staff was one of the main reasons she walked picket lines. "This is not just for teachers. It's also for counselors, nurses, psychologists and social workers," said O'Brien, who teaches 10th grade English.

The new contract also eliminates a longstanding clause that gave the district authority over class sizes, officials said. Grades 4 through 12 would be reduced by one student during each of the next two school years and two pupils in 2021-2022.

District Superintendent Austin Beutner said he was delighted the deal was reached. But he hinted that financial challenges remained.

"The issue has always been how do we pay for it?" Beutner said. "That issue does not go away now that we have a contract. We can't solve 40 years of underinvestment in public education in just one week or just one contract."

Under the tentative agreement, the district, the union and the mayor's office will work jointly to "advocate for increasedcounty and state funding" for Los Angeles schools, according to the UTLA summary.

The Board of Education met in closed session on Tuesday and was expected to move quickly to ratify the deal, which would expire at the end of June 2022.

The deal came as teachers in Denver were finishing up a vote on whether to go on strike as soon as next Monday. The main sticking point is increasing base pay and lessening teachers' reliance on one-time bonuses for having students with high test scores or working in a high-poverty school.

In Oakland, California, some teachers called in sick last week as part of an unofficial rally over their contract negotiations, which also hinge partly on a demand for smaller class sizes.

AP

Striking Los Angeles Unified District teachers are joined by parents and students in front of Evelyn Thurman Gratts Elementary School in Los Angeles on Tuesday, Jan. 22, 2019.

Salvadoran man to be charged in 4 fatal shootings in Nevada

LAS VEGAS (AP)—A man suspected of being in the U.S. illegally shot and killed four people in Nevada over the past two weeks, including an elderly Reno couple, authorities said, and the slayings added fuel to the immigration debate.

Wilbur Ernesto Martinez-Guzman, 19, from El Salvador, has been jailed in Carson City since Saturday on possession of stolen property, burglary and immigration charges. Authorities said they expect to file murder charges against him in Reno in the shooting deaths of a Washoe County couple and in Douglas County in the slayings of two women in Gardnerville.

Carson City Sheriff Ken Furlong said federal immigration authorities told his office that Martinez-Guzman was in the country illegally. Immigration and Customs Enforcement did not have details on his entry into the U.S.

The investigation is ongoing, the sheriff said, and it was too early to comment on a possible motive.

Investigators who had been tracking Martinez-Guzman considered him "an imminent threat" when they arrested him Saturday afternoon in the parking lot of a shopping mall.

"We couldn't account for him Friday night, and we couldn't predict what he would do Saturday night," Furlong told The Associated Press. "It was too great a risk to the public not to make the arrest."

Detectives had watched Martinez-Guzman go to a car wash and trash bins, raising concern that he might try to dispose of evidence connected to the slayings. He did not have a weapon when he was handcuffed, the sheriff said.

The suspect did not yet have an attorney who could speak on his behalf, according to the sheriff.

President Donald Trump seized on the killings as evidence of the need for his proposed U.S.-Mexico border wall.

"Four people in Nevada viciously robbed and killed by an illegal immigrant who should not have been in our Country," Trump said Monday in a tweet. "We need a powerful Wall!"

The killings are the latest crimes Trump has cited to bring attention to the wall, which is at the center of his battle with Democrats that has shut down much of the federal government.

Since the start of his presidency, he has highlighted crimes committed by immigrants who were here illegally, including the killing of a 32-year-old woman at a San Francisco pier in 2015. Last month, he tweeted about allegations that a man from Mexico fatally shot a California police officer.

Many academics and Trump's critics have pushed back on the president's narrative, citing studies that have found that immigrants are less likely to commit crimes than people born in the United States.

The Nevada suspect, who was due in court Thursday, had lived in the Carson City area for about a year. His only known infraction was a speeding ticket, the sheriff said.

"We have no information this guy has ever been on anyone's radar," Furlong said.

ACROSS THE NATION

Student tackled for stealing own car settles suit for $1.25M

EVANSTON, Ill. (AP)—A Chicago suburb has tentatively agreed to pay a former doctoral student $1.25 million to settle a lawsuit alleging police officers tackled him to the ground and arrested him for stealing a car that turned out to be his own, his attorney said. Evanston City Manager Wally Bobkiewicz confirmed a settlement was reached with Lawrence Crosby, who was 25 and an engineering doctoral student at Northwestern University in 2015 when the incident occurred. Bobkiewicz declined to provide the amount of the settlement pending final approval by the City Council next week. Crosby's attorney, Timothy Touhy, told the Chicago Tribune that the amount was $1.25 million. The incident was one of several high-profile cases in the Chicago area in recent years involving violent, sometimes deadly encounters between police officers and black men. Last week, a judge sentenced a former Chicago police officer to nearly seven years in prison for the fatal shooting of Laquan McDonald, whose death was seen on a graphic dashcam video.

Mom arrested after dead baby found in Amazon site's restroom

PHOENIX (AP)—A woman has been arrested on suspicion of unlawful disposal of human remains after her newborn baby was found dead inside a bathroom at an Amazon distribution center in southwest Phoenix last week, police announced Tuesday. Samantha Vivier, 22, was booked into jail and scheduled to have her initial court appearance Tuesday night. Court documents weren't immediately available, but police said they don't believe anyone else was involved in the baby's death. It wasn't immediately clear Tuesday evening if Vivier had a lawyer who could speak on her behalf. Police said the body of a baby girl was discovered the night of Jan. 16 inside the women's restroom in the secured Amazon facility. A day later, police said they had found and spoken with the baby's mother but didn't say whether she was an Amazon employee to prevent her identity from being revealed. The baby appeared to be full-term and was believed to have been born on-site, according to police, who said the Maricopa County medical examiner will determine the cause of death.

Thousands of birds die at California's Salton Sea

SALTON CITY, Calif. (AP)—Authorities say thousands of migrating birds have died at California's Salton Sea this month from avian cholera. The California Department of Fish and Game says ducks, gulls and other birds were found dead at the south end of the state's largest lake between Jan. 8 and last Thursday. Testing showed signs of avian cholera, an infectious bacterial disease. It's spread through direct contact or from contaminated food or water. Wildlife officials say outbreaks occur annually as a result of birds flocking closely together during migration. The 350-square-mile (560-square-kilometer) lake is located in the desert near the Mexican border. It's a regular stop for migrating birds.

Asia

A look at Malaysia's monarchy before sultans pick next king

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—After stripping Malaysia's royal families of some of their powers during his 22-year stint as prime minister, Mahathir Mohamad almost didn't make it to the premiership a second time.

Though largely a ceremonial post, Malaysia's monarch still signs off on most laws and appointments, including the prime minister, and hours after Mahathir and his alliance's stunning general election victory last May, King Sultan Muhammad V offered the job to someone else.

The offer was rejected and Mahathir heaped pressure on the king by holding a series of news conferences. The king subsequently signed off on Mahathir, but the hours of uncertainty put the spotlight on Malaysia's monarchy at a time when some of the royals are seeking to reassert their influence in politics.

Though Malaysia has only had a constitutional monarch since 1957, several of Malaysia's nine royal families trace their roots to centuries-old Malay kingdoms that were independent states until they were brought together by the British.

Sultan Muhammad V became the nation's first king to give up his post when he abruptly abdicated on Jan. 6 without explanation. Now the nation waits for Thursday's meeting of the royal families in which they will choose a replacement.

AP

In this July 17, 2018, file photo, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahatir Mohamad, left, passes the opening speech to King Sultan Muhammad V during the opening of the 14th parliament session at the Parliament House in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Here's a closer look at Malaysia's monarchy:

ROYAL DYNASTIES

Traditional ethnic Malay rulers—mostly known as the sultan—constitutionally head nine of Malaysia's 13 states, forming one of the world's largest monarchy systems. Seven of the royal families are hereditary monarchies, with the northern Kedah sultanate one of the oldest unbroken dynasties in the world, dating back to the 12th century.

In Perak state, the second oldest ruling house in Malaysia, three royal families take turns to ascend the throne based on seniority. The ruler in Negeri Sembilan state, where the royal lineage is linked to the Minangkabaus from west Sumatra in Indonesia, is elected by a council of four territory chiefs.

All the families are headed by ethnic Malay Muslims males, as required.

Some of the royal families, especially those in the wealthy states of Selangor and Johor, have built-up large business interests. The most prominent is billionaire Sultan Ibrahim Ismail of Johor, who owns a fleet of jets and loves Harley-Davidson motorcycles. The Johor sultan is also the most powerful, having his own army—a condition agreed upon for the state to join modern-day Malaysia. His army's role is largely ceremonial today.

PICKING A KING

Malaysia's constitutional monarchy was put in place after the country's independence from Britain in 1957.

The nine heads of the royal families take part in what is known as the Conference of Rulers and every five years elect one among themselves to be Malaysia's king through a secret ballot.

The throne was initially rotated based on seniority, but there is now an established rotation order from one state to the next, making the vote more of a formality. Royals, however, can choose to divert due to health or other issues.

NEXT IN LINE

The ruler of central Pahang state is next in line to be king. Sultan Abdullah Azlan Shah succeeded his ailing 88-year-old father on Jan. 15, in a move seen as paving the way for him to become the next king.

Sultan Abdullah, who was state regent for the past two years due to his father's ill health, is active in the sports. He is president of the Asian Hockey Federation and a council member of world football governing body FIFA.

Sultan Abdullah, 59, must be supported by at least five of the state rulers. Next in order after Pahang, is Johor state.

HISTORIC ABDICATION

King Sultan Muhammad V shocked the nation by announcing his abdication this month, days after returning from two months of medical leave. The 49-year-old sultan from eastern Kelantan state only reigned for two years as Malaysia's 15th king and didn't give any reason for quitting.

During his leave, it was reported that the king married a 25-year-old former Russian beauty queen. Photos of the two at a wedding reportedly held in Moscow were circulated in the British and Russian press and on social media. Neither the king, the palace nor the government has confirmed the wedding.

It marked the first abdication in the nation's history. The reigns of three other kings were shortened by their deaths.

THE SULTAN'S ROLE

The state rulers are highly respected among Malay Muslims, who account for two-thirds of Malaysia's 32 million people, and are seen as guardians of Islam and Malay traditions.

In addition to ceremonial duties, they can withhold consent for the dissolution of their state's assembly and the appointments of their state's chief minister.

During his first stint as prime minister, Mahathir pushed through constitutional amendments that stripped the sultans of their power to veto state and federal legislation. The amendments also removed their legal immunity following a series of scandals involving the Johor royal family. A special court has been set up to prosecute royals, but cases are rare.

HE WHO IS MADE LORD

Known as the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong, or He Who is Made Lord, Malaysia's king resides in a 650- million-ringgit ($158-million) palace in Kuala Lumpur.

The king's duties, similar to those of the British monarch, are largely ceremonial since administrative power is vested in the prime minister and parliament. He is the nominal head of the government and armed forces.

All laws, cabinet appointments and dissolution of parliament for general elections require his assent. The king also issues pardons for criminals.

Public criticism of the king and state sultans is generally illegal. Under Malaysian sedition laws, people who incite "hatred or contempt" toward the monarchy can be imprisoned for three years.

Malaysia's constitution allocates some 5 million ringgit ($1.21 million) a year for the expenses of the king and his household, including palace maintenance, although the sum can be increased with cabinet approval.

POLITICAL STATEMENTS

The king and some state rulers have been vocal in politics in recent years. In 2015, the nine rulers issued a rare joint statement calling for a swift investigation into a massive corruption scandal at the 1MDB state investment fund.

The scandal promoted public anger that eventually led to a historic change of government in last May's polls.

Last year, the Selangor state sultan also appointed a new chief minister who had not been formally proposed by the government. King Sultan Muhammad V also sought to block the appointment of a non-Muslim attorney-general last year but gave in after Mahathir's government refused to budge on its candidate.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Australia asks about dual citizen reported missing in China

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)—The Australian government says it is seeking information about a Chinese-Australian writer who has been reported missing in China. Novelist and influential online commentator Yang Hengjun was a Chinese diplomat before he became an Australian citizen. Friends say he been living in the United States with his wife and her child and had returned to China last week. Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade said in a statement on Wednesday it was "seeking information about an Australian citizen who has been reported missing in China. Owing to our privacy obligations we will not provide further comment." Yang's friend, University of Technology Sydney academic Feng Chongyi, told The Australian newspaper he believes Yang is now being detained in Beijing by the Ministry of State Security.

Indian police arrest 61 Rohingya Muslims this week

GAUHATI,India (AP)—Police in northeastern India have arrested 61 Rohingya Muslims this week for illegal entry, officials said Tuesday, amid reports that more than 1,300 have recently crossed the border from India into Bangladesh. In Assam state, police said they arrested 30 Rohingya, including 12 children, who were found traveling on a bus Monday night to Gauhati, the state capital. In neighboring Tripura state, police said they arrested 31 Rohingya on Tuesday after they spent two days in the open in a no man's land along the border with Bangladesh. The Rohingya had been stranded there after both Bangladeshi and Indian border guards refused to let them enter their territories. Ajoy Das, a local police official, said members of India's Border Security Force provided them with food and blankets and later detained them before handing them over to police.

Pakistan probe finds police wrongly killed couple, daughter

LAHORE, Pakistan (AP)—A provincial minister says five police officers have been charged with murder after a probe into a weekend shootout concluded that three people were wrongly killed in a botched operation on a highway. At Tuesday's news conference, Raja Bisharat said four police officers were also charged with mismanaging Saturday's raid on a car that left four civilians dead in Sahiwal. Saturday's shootout drew nationwide condemnation after police killed grocery store owner Mohammad Khalil, his wife and his teenage daughter. Bisharat said an investigation into the death of a fourth person, a man, was ongoing, although witnesses say police killed the four in cold blood despite seeing children in the car. Authorities say the slain were unarmed and Khalil's three surviving children—who witnessed the killings—are still traumatized.

World

Zimbabwe leader: Violence by security forces 'unacceptable'

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP)—Zimbabwe's president on Tuesday said "unacceptable" violence by security forces will be investigated after a days-long crackdown on economic unrest, while a doctor said the 12 documented deaths and more than 300 people wounded are likely "are just a fraction of the actual victims."

President Emmerson Mnangagwa called for a national dialogue among political parties and civic leaders, even as arrests continued. He spoke after skipping a visit to the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland under pressure to return home.

Zimbabwe's military is in the streets for the first time since post-election violence in August killed six people. This time, people report being hunted down in their homes. More than 600 people have been arrested, most denied bail.

The "army is on the forefront of orchestrating the violence," backed by ruling ZANU-PF youth gangs and police, Dr Norman Matara with the Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights told reporters in Johannesburg.

The pattern of injuries seen in the more than 300 people wounded and 12 dead suggested premeditation and training in torture, Matara said, and "we think these numbers are just a fraction of the actual victims" as some were too scared to seek treatment.

AP

Zimbabwe's President Emmerson Mnangagwa speaks during a meeting with Belarus' President Alexander Lukashenko in Minsk, Belarus, Thursday, Jan. 17, 2019.

Several people were dragged from their hospital beds and arrested. Some were shot in the head at close range and died. About half of those wounded were bystanders hit by stray bullets when the military opened fire on crowds. The group documented abuse of people as young as 9.

Some medical professionals, accused of "trying to subvert the government" by publicizing the toll, are now afraid to help victims, Matara said.

Zimbabwe's president said insubordination will not be tolerated and "if required, heads will roll."

He defended, however, the dramatic fuel price increase that began the unrest by making gasoline in Zimbabwe the most world's expensive. Authorities said it was aimed at easing the demand that created miles-long lines as gas stations.

But Zimbabweans who had seen no improvement in the collapsed economy under Mnangagwa, who took office in 2017 after the ouster of longtime leader Robert Mugabe, lost their patience. Activists and labor leaders called for people to stay at home in protest. Others took to the streets, some looting in anger or desperation.

Mnangagwa's government has blamed the opposition, despite witness accounts of security forces killing or wounding bystanders, including a 17-year-old .

"Everyone has the right to protest, but this was not a peaceful protest," Mnangagwa said.

The government-backed Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission said eight people were killed and criticized the use of the military and live ammunition. It said the government had not learned from the August crackdown, and should compensate "victims of military and police brutality."

Mnangagwa has previously said he is open to dialogue with the main opposition MDC party, which narrowly lost both the July election and a court challenge alleging fraud. He has dismissed a government of national unity.

US aid cuts hit Palestinians, further dimming hope for peace

JERUSALEM (AP)—Tens of thousands of Palestinians are no longer getting food aid or basic health services from America, U.S.-funded infrastructure projects have been halted, and an innovative peace-building program in Jerusalem is scaling back its activities.

The Trump administration's decision last year to cut more than $200 million in development aid to the Palestinians is forcing NGOs to slash programs and lay off staff as the effects ripple through a community that has spent more than two decades promoting peace in the Middle East.

The U.S. government's development agency, USAID, has provided more than $5.5 billion to the Palestinians since 1994 for infrastructure, health, education, governance and humanitarian aid programs, all intended to underpin the eventual creation of an independent state.

Much of that aid is channeled through international NGOs, which were abruptly informed of the cuts last summer and have been scrambling to keep their programs alive.

President Donald Trump says the USAID cuts are aimed at pressuring the Palestinians to return to peace talks, but Palestinian officials say the move has further poisoned relations after the U.S. recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital last year. The aid groups, many of which have little or no connection to the Palestinian Authority, say the cuts hurt the most vulnerable Palestinians and those most committed to peace with Israel.

"If you want to maintain the idea of the peace process, you have to maintain the people who would be part of the peace process," said Lana Abu Hijleh, the local director for Global Communities, an international NGO active in the Palestinian territories since 1995.

Before the aid cuts were announced, it provided food aid—branded as a gift from the American people—to more than 180,000 Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza on behalf of the World Food Program. USAID had planned to contribute $19 million a year for the next five years to continue the project but pulled out in August.

Global Communities can now only provide aid to 90,000 people through March, and Abu Hijleh had to lay off around 30 staff, including in Gaza, where unemployment exceeds 50 percent.

"It really hurts, because you're talking about the most basic level of assistance," she said. The average family receives a monthly voucher worth around $130.

Sadeqa Nasser, a woman living in Gaza's Jebaliya refugee camp, used her voucher to support her disabled husband, their six children and four grandchildren.

She says her sons each bring in less than $5 a day from odd jobs. "They cannot afford to buy food for their families, so I help them out," she said.

Russia, Japan make no visible progress on territorial spat

MOSCOW (AP)—The leaders of Russia and Japan acknowledged Tuesday that settling a decades-long territorial dispute poses a daunting challenge but vowed to continue negotiations.

The Soviet Union took the four southernmost Kuril Islands during the final days of World War II. Japan asserts territorial rights to the islands, which it calls the Northern Territories, and the dispute has kept the countries from signing a peace treaty.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said after hosting Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe for several hours of talks in the Kremlin that they need to negotiate a solution to the dispute that would receive public support.

"Delicate work is needed to create conditions for reaching a mutually acceptable solution," Putin said. "A settlement that negotiators would propose must be acceptable to the people of Russia and Japan and supported by the public."

Abe said they instructed their foreign ministers to meet again on the sidelines of a security conference in Germany next month to continue negotiations on a possible deal.

More high-level discussions will follow when Putin visits Japan in June to attend a summit of the Group of 20 summit.

"It's not easy to solve a problem left unsolved for more than 70 years after the war ended, but we must do that," the Japanese prime minister said.

Abe has held dozens of meetings with Putin in recent years in a bid to solve the dispute, and they agreed in November to accelerate negotiations based on a 1956 Soviet proposal to return two of the islands to Japan.

Earlier this month, the Japanese leader voiced hope that this year would mark a breakthrough in talks and spoke about an imminent change of the islands' status—remarks that irked the Kremlin.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov warned Japan last week that it must recognize all four islands as part of Russia as a starting point for talks—a demand that didn't bode well for Abe's hopes for a quick deal. The Kremlin foreign affairs adviser Yuri Ushakov also noted that recent statements from Tokyo made the talks between the two presidents even more difficult.

Japanese Foreign Ministry spokesman Takeshi Osuga declined to comment on whether the atmosphere at Tuesday's talks was troubled by Russia's criticisms. But he portrayed the frequency of Putin-Abe contacts as a favorable sign.

"This was the fourth summit meeting within six months," Osuga told reporters. "This is in general something exceptional ... it's not something we see very often in diplomacy."

Speaking after Tuesday's negotiations, Putin reaffirmed that Russia is interested in negotiating a peace treaty, adding that the 1956 Soviet declaration prioritized signing the document.

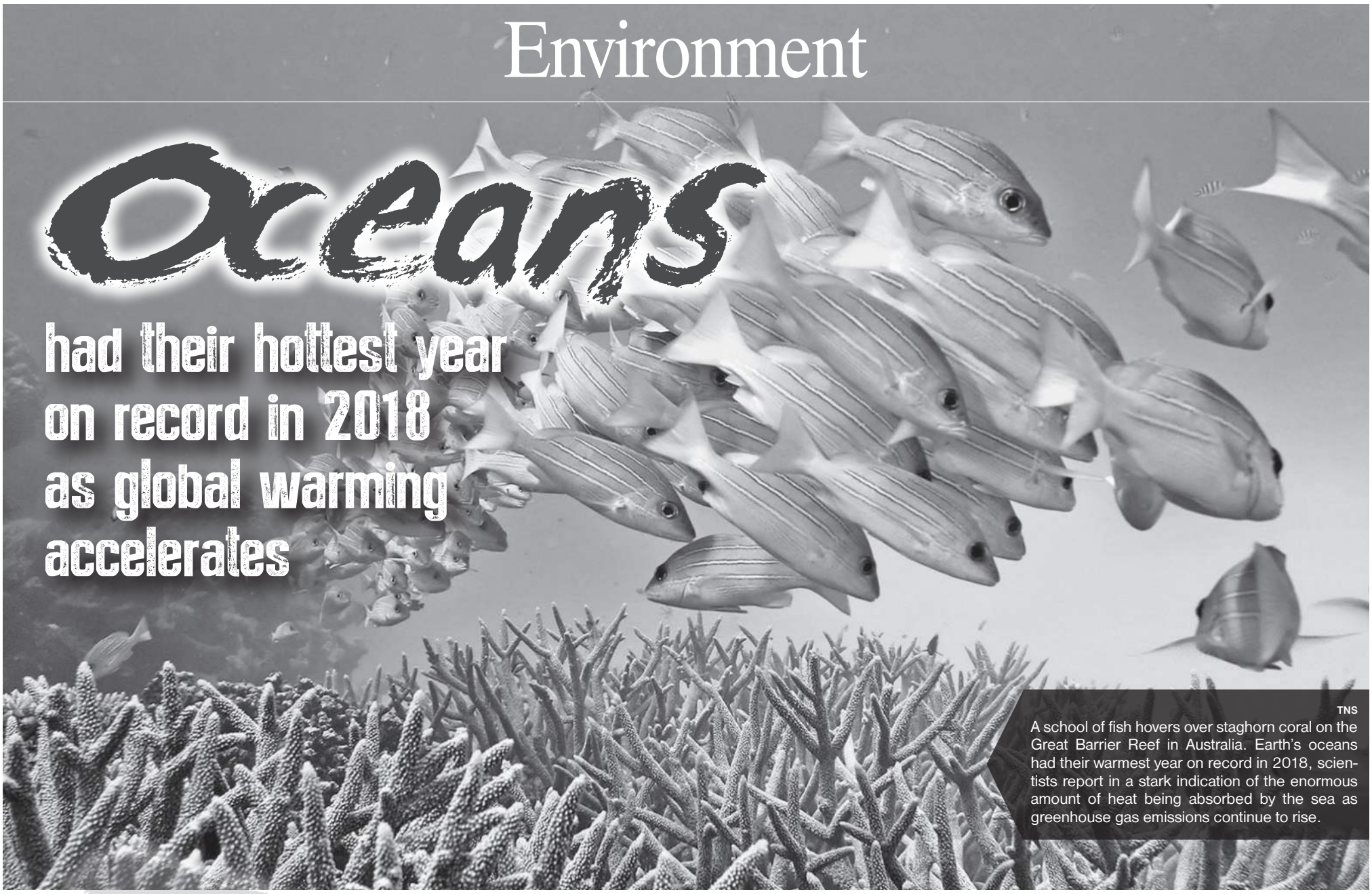
Abe pointed at expanding economic ties and cultural contacts between the two nations, adding that Moscow and Tokyo agree on the need to further expand links.

He noted that they agreed that a charter flight to the islands will be organized in the summer to allow Japanese to visit their ancestors' graves.

Putin argued that while trade and investment have been growing, they are still insufficient. He invited Japanese business to invest in infrastructure projects, such as beefing up cargo transfers via the Trans-Siberian Railway and shipments through Arctic sea routes.

Environment

Oceans had their hottest year on record in 2018 as global warming accelerates



TNS
A school of fish hovers over staghorn coral on the Great Barrier Reef in Australia. Earth's oceans had their warmest year on record in 2018, scientists report in a stark indication of the enormous amount of heat being absorbed by the sea as greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise.

By TONY BARBOZA
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Earth's oceans had their warmest year on record in 2018, a stark indication of the enormous amount of heat being absorbed by the sea as greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise, scientists reported Wednesday.

The analysis by an international team of scientists confirms the oceans are heating up much faster than previously recognized, and that the pace of warming has accelerated sharply since the 1990s.

Rising ocean temperatures are already having profound consequences across the globe, scientists say, contributing to more intense hurricanes, destroying coral reefs and causing sea levels to rise.

The report in the journal Advances in Academic Sciences builds on a study last week that found oceans are warming 40 percent more, on average, than was estimated by a United Nations scientific panel just five years ago. In fact, each of the last 10 years is among the 10 warmest on record, according to data from Lijing Cheng of the Institute of Atmospheric Physics in Beijing, who led the research.

The unrelenting pattern is "incontrovertible proof that the Earth is warming," and an unmistakable signal of the serious damage humans are already causing through climate change, the authors of the new study wrote.

Earth's oceans provide a crucial buffer against climate change by swallowing 93 percent of the excess heat trapped by the greenhouse gases humans are spewing into the atmosphere.

"The oceans are really the Earth's thermometer," said Zeke Hausfather, a climate scientist with the academic nonprofit Berkeley Earth who collaborated on the research. "They're where all the heat ends up. They're where we'd expect the strongest signs of climate change to be. And that's exactly what we see."

In contrast with rising surface temperatures, which can vary from year to year with the influence of weather and cyclical climate patterns like El Nino, the warming of the ocean has been inexorable, with virtually every year breaking the heat record set just 12 months earlier.

"There's no sign of any slowdown or pause," Hausfather said. "The ocean temperature is increasing year over year in lockstep with increases in atmospheric carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases."

Indeed, emissions have accelerated as President Donald Trump and some other world leaders have pursued energy policies that promote fossil fuels. Global carbon emissions increased 1.6 percent between 2016 and 2017, then jumped an additional 2.7 percent in 2018, according to estimates published last month in the journal Environmental Research Letters. Last week, the research firm Rhodium Group reported that U.S. carbon emissions rose 3.4 percent in 2018 after years of declines.

Rather than measure the water's temperature, the researchers focused on the amount of energy the oceans had taken in. They determined that the heat content has increased by around 370 Zettajoules since 1955. The increase in 2018 alone compared with 2017 — about 9 Zettajoules — was about 100 million times greater than the heat released by the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, Hausfather said.

The rate of warming in the ocean's upper 6,500 feet has been up to five times faster since 1991 than it was in the 1970s and '80s, scientists found. The warming is more pronounced in shallower waters, with about two-thirds of the energy accumulating within 2,000 feet of the surface.

The effects will grow more devastating the longer oceans continue to warm, scientists say. Wetter, more powerful hurricanes, like Harvey in 2017, will become more frequent. Marine ecosystems, including coral reefs already stressed by past warming, will be unable to recover from marine heat waves and bleaching.

Oceans cover 71 percent of the Earth's surface, but the heat they contain is distributed unevenly. In 2018, one of the warmest spots was along the East Coast of the United States, where Hurricane Florence caused severe flood damage in the Carolinas last fall.

Warming ocean waters have had a direct influence on storms like Florence and Harvey, scientists said, feeding them more energy and allowing them to hold more water vapor that rains down on coastal communities.

"It leads to an intensification of the storm, and a bigger storm," said Kevin Trenberth, a climate scientist at the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colo., and a co-author of both recent studies.

Ocean warming is also the main driver of the rising sea levels that are threatening coastal communities and ecosystems in addition to causing more severe flooding.

Without global action to slash greenhouse gas emissions, the study projects, the planet could see about another foot of sea level rise just from warmer water taking up more space. That so-called thermal expansion doesn't factor in additional increases expected as ice sheets melt in Greenland and Antarctica.

Lisa Suatoni, a marine ecologist at the Natural Resources Defense Council, said that the warming detected to date is already causing rapid transformation of ocean ecosystems, including certain marine species moving toward the poles and economically harmful disruptions to fisheries that provide food and livelihoods to hundreds of millions of people worldwide.

"The ocean is playing this silent but important service to the Earth in absorbing most of the heat that's being trapped by our greenhouse gas emissions, but that service comes at a cost," Suatoni said. "The transformation that global warming is having on the oceans is largely unseen because we're land animals and it's hard to observe."

That's changing. Scientists' observations are improving considerably thanks to new measurement techniques, particularly Argo, a network of drifting, automated floats in operation since the mid-2000s that periodically descend into the ocean to measure temperature and salinity, then transmit the readings to satellites.

The new analysis is based on Argo's measurements of the upper 6,500 feet of the ocean combined with earlier readings that go back to the 1950s. Scientists compared four different estimates of ocean warming completed since the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report in 2014 and found them converging in agreement: Oceans were warming faster than prior estimates.

The findings of record ocean warming come one day before the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and NASA were scheduled to release data on the average global surface temperature for 2018. The federal agencies are expected to report that 2018 was the fourth-hottest year on record, but their announcements have been delayed indefinitely by the partial government shutdown.

Once full operations are restored, it will take at least three days for scientists to finalize their reports, said Gavin Schmidt, head of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies.

The shutdown has also halted the flow of information to the United Kingdom's Met Office, its national weather service, which hasn't been able to finish its calculations of last year's average global surface temperature, said spokesman Grahame Madge.

"With the United States accounting for around 3 percent of the world's land surface, the absence of American data, even for one month, would skew the final figure," he said. "We're hoping that the data can be released before the end of January."

A report last week from the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service said the last four years have been the warmest on record, with 2018 in the No. 4 slot.

With a weak El Nino likely underway in the Pacific Ocean, 2019 air temperatures have a good chance of being hotter than they were last year.

Life & Style

Oscar nods honor 'Roma,' 'The Favourite,' 'Black Panther'

NEW YORK (AP)—Oscar voters on Tuesday showered Alfonso Cuaron's "Roma" and Yorgos Lanthimos' "The Favourite" with a leading 10 nominations for the 91st Academy Awards, while two dominant but contentious Hollywood forces—Netflix and Marvel—each scored their first best picture nomination.

Though many expected "A Star Is Born," Bradley Cooper's revival of one of Hollywood's most remade show business myths, to top the nominations, Cooper was surprisingly overlooked as director and the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences instead put its fullest support behind a pair of indies by international directors.

With the black-and-white, Spanish-language "Roma," Netflix scored its first best picture nomination, a prize the streaming giant has dearly sought. Marvel, too, joined the club with Ryan Coogler's "Black Panther," the first superhero movie ever nominated for best picture.

Cuaron tied the record for most decorated Oscar nominee ever for one film with four individual nods for "Roma," his deeply personal exhumation of his Mexico City childhood. Cuaron was nominated for direction, cinematography, original screenplay and best picture. Only Orson Welles ("Citizen Kane") and Warren Beatty (who did it twice with "Reds" and "Heaven Can Wait") have matched the four-nod feat.

Cuaron, previously a six-time nominee and winner for directing "Gravity," said by phone from London that the nominations for such a personal film were more meaningful to him, as was the attention for a film about a humble indigenous domestic worker (Yalitza Aparicio, who was nominated for best actress). He praised Netflix for its commitment to his film.

"Cinema needs the opportunity to be diverse," Cuaron said. "What mainstream cinema and the theatrical experience has lacked in general is diversity. And I'm talking about diversity in terms of stories and characters and ways of doing films."

Just as rewarded Tuesday was Lanthimos' period romp, which resounded most in the acting categories thanks to its trio of actresses: Olivia Colman in the best actress category, and Rachel Weisz and Emma Stone in supporting.

Along with "Roma," "Black Panther" and "The Favourite," the eight nominees for best picture were: Peter Farrelly's interracial road trip tale "Green Book," Spike Lee's white supremacist evisceration "BlacKkKlansman," the Freddie Mercury biopic "Bohemian Rhapsody," Adam McKay's highly critical Dick Cheney biopic "Vice" and "A Star Is Born," which still landed eight nominations, including best actress for Lady Gaga and best supporting actor for Sam Elliott.

This combination photo shows composers, from left, Ludwig Goransson of "Black Panther," Terence Blanchard of "BlacKkKlansman," Nicholas Britell of "If Beale Street Could Talk," Alexandre Desplat of "Isle of Dogs," and Marc Shaiman of "Mary Poppins Returns," who were all nominated for an Oscar for best original score on Tuesday, Jan. 22. The 91st Academy Awards will be held on Feb. 24. AP

"Black Panther," the year's biggest domestic box-office hit and a bona fide cultural event, finally cracked the category long kryptonite to superheroes . Despite the overwhelming popularity of comic book movies, they had previously been shunned from Hollywood's top honor to the consternation of some industry insiders. After "The Dark Knight" was snubbed in 2009, the academy expanded the best picture category from five to up to 10 nominees.

The lush, big-budget craft of "Black Panther" was rewarded with seven total nominations, including Hannah Beachler and Jay Hart's production design, Ludwig Goransson's score, Ruth Carter's costume design and Kendrick Lamar and SZA's song "All the Stars." Beachler became the first African-American nominated for production design.

"To break down a wall like that, to be your ancestors' wildest dreams, to show other young women of color and boys and girls that you can do whatever you want no matter what struggles you have in your life—all of that. That's what it means to me," said Beachler, talking by phone from the Cincinnati set of Todd Haynes' latest.

There has likewise been resistance among some academy members to awarding Netflix films since the company typically bypasses movie theaters. Steven Spielberg has said Netflix films are more like TV movies and deserve an Emmy, not an Oscar . Netflix altered its policy for "Roma" and the Coen brothers' "The Ballad of Buster Scruggs" (which earned three unexpected nods), premiering them first in theaters before debuting them on Netflix. In turn, it was rewarded with a 15 nominations overall, second only to Disney's 17.

Three decades after landing a writing nod for 1989's Do the Right Thing," Spike Lee was nominated for his first directing Oscar for "BlacKkKlansman."

"Thirty years is a long time, ain't it?" Lee said by phone Tuesday with a hearty laugh. The 61-year-old filmmaker lamented the oversight of his lead actor, John David Washington, whom he consoled with a prediction of future awards: "Young blood, you'll be here." But Lee took pride in his film's six nominations, and he likes his odds.

"'BlacKkKlansman' is the dark horse—pun intended," said Lee, cackling. "You know what? That's fitting. I've always been an underdog, from the very beginning, from film school. That narrative has not changed. And I like that position."

The other directing nominees were Lanthimos, Cuaron, Pawel Pawlikowski ("Cold War") and McKay ("Vice")—a field that, a year after continued focus on gender inequality in Hollywood, included no female directors. Some had campaigned for Debra Granik ("Leave No Trace") or Chloe Zhao ("The Rider") to become the sixth woman ever nominated for best director.

The nominations, announced by Kumail Nanjiani and Tracee Ellis Ross from the Samuel Goldwyn Theatre in Beverly Hills, California, included plenty of surprises. In a blockbuster year for documentaries , the Fred Rogers documentary "Won't You Be My Neighbor" was snubbed despite more than $22 million in ticket sales (a huge sum for a doc). Instead the nominees were "Free Solo," "Hale County This Morning, This Evening," "Minding the Gap," "Of Fathers and Sons" and the Ruth Bader Ginsberg portrait "RBG."

The acting categories played out largely as expected with a few notable differences. Along with Lady Gaga, Colman and Aparicio, the best lead actress nominees were Glenn Close ("The Wife") and Melissa McCarthy ("Can You Ever Forgive Me?").

In best actor, the expected front runner Christian Bale was nominated for his transformation into Cheney in "Vice" (Bale's fourth Oscar nod), along with Cooper, Willem Dafoe ("At Eternity's Gate"), Rami Malek ("Bohemian Rhapsody") and Viggo Mortensen ("Green Book").

The nominees for best supporting actress were Amy Adams ("Vice"), Marina De Tavira ("Roma"), Regina King ("If Beale Street Could Talk"), along with Stone and Weisz. Tavira was something a surprise, likely unseating Claire Foy of "First Man."

But perhaps the biggest acting snub came in best supporting actor, where Timothee Chalamet, who broke through last year with "Call Me By Your Name," was left out for his drug addict turn in "Beautiful Boy." Nominated were previous winner Mahershala Ali ("Green Book"), Adam Driver ("BlacKkKlansman"), Richard E. Grant ("Can You Ever Forgive Me?") and Sam Rockwell ("Vice"), who won the trophy last year.

With nominees like "The Favourite," "Can You Ever Forgive Me," "Green Book" and "Bohemian Rhapsody," GLAAD president Sarah Kate Ellis called it "a banner year for LGBTQ inclusion."

Some Oscar regulars padded their career tallies. Joel and Ethan Coen notched their seventh screenwriting nomination. Close, never a winner, landed her seventh acting nod. Costume designer Sandy Powell received her 13th and 14th nominations, for "The Favourite" and "Mary Poppins Returns." But the nominees were also crowded with first-timers, including new performers (Aparicio) and veteran ones (Grant, Elliott, Colman, King). Paul Schrader, the 72-year-old "Taxi Driver" scribe, was nominated for his first Oscar for the script to his religious thriller "First Reformed."

The lead-up to Tuesday's nominations was rocky for both the film academy and some of the contending movies. Shortly after being announced as host, comedian Kevin Hart was forced to withdraw over years-old homophobic tweets that the comedian eventually apologized for. That has left the Oscars, one month before the Feb. 24 ceremony, without an emcee, and likely to stay that way.

Some film contenders, like "Green Book" and the Freddie Mercury biopic "Bohemian Rhapsody," have suffered waves of backlash, even as their awards have mounted. Before landing five nominations Tuesday, "Green Book"—which has been criticized for relying on racial tropes—won the top award from the Producers Guild, an honor that has been a reliable Oscar barometer. In the 10 years since the Oscars expanded its best-picture ballot, the PGA winner has gone on to win best picture eight times.

Last year's Oscar telecast was watched by a record low of 26.5 million viewers . This year will at least feature a number of popular nominees, including "Black Panther," "Bohemian Rhapsody" and "A Star Is Born." Just how many people have seen "Roma," though, remains a mystery. Netflix doesn't release box office receipts or streaming viewership.

It's also an unusually international crop of nominees. It's only the second time that directors from two foreign language films were nominated for best director (Cuaron and Poland's Pawlikowski). "Roma" is aiming to be the first foreign language film to win best picture. Some of that could potentially be attributed to a changing academy, which has greatly expanded its ranks in recent years to diversify its membership, including more overseas members.

Up for best foreign language film are "Roma," "Cold War," "Capernaum" (Lebanon), "Never Look Away" (Germany) and the Palme d'Or winner, "Shoplifters" (Japan).

A year after taking home best picture with "The Shape of Water," Fox Searchlight tied Netflix with 15 nominations, even as Searchlight and its parent studio, 20th Century Fox, are in the process of being acquired by the Walt Disney Co. If their releases counted under Disney, the new mega-studio would have dwarfed all studios with 37 nominations.

Porn star's hush money suit against Trump could be tossed

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A federal judge appeared inclined Tuesday to toss out a lawsuit against President Donald Trump by porn actress Stormy Daniels that sought to tear up a hush-money settlement about their alleged affair.

Trump and his former personal lawyer asked a judge to dismiss the lawsuit after agreeing to rescind a nondisclosure agreement that included a $130,000 payment to Daniels.

Judge S. James Otero did not rule in U.S. District Court, but he seemed to agree with lawyers for the president and Michael Cohen that there were no longer grounds for a lawsuit.

"It seems you've achieved ... what you sought to achieve," Otero said to Daniels' attorney.

If Otero does throw out the case, it would give both sides a chance to claim victory.

The case would allow Daniels to speak without threat of legal consequences, but it would also prevent further litigation she has sought to force the president and Cohen to give sworn testimony.

Daniels, whose real name is Stephanie Clifford, brought the lawsuit to free herself from the agreement that silenced her as the 2016 presidential campaign reached its conclusion.

Cohen had arranged the payment and later pleaded guilty to campaign violations after admitting the deal was struck to help Trump prevail in the presidential contest.

Trump has denied the alleged 2006 affair.

Daniels had claimed the agreement was not valid because Trump's signature was not on it and the president's lawyer has said he was never party to the settlement.

Despite appearing to get what Daniels originally sought—dismissal of the agreement she disregarded long ago in speaking to news media and writing a book—her lawyer fought hard to keep the case alive.

Attorney Michael Avenatti, who once toyed with making a presidential run to take on Trump, wanted the case to continue so he could force Trump and Cohen to give depositions.

Singer Chris Brown released in Paris after rape complaint

PARIS (AP)—U.S. singer Chris Brown and two other people were released Tuesday from police custody after a woman filed a rape complaint against them, the Paris prosecutor's office said.

The Grammy-winning singer was detained Monday with two other suspects on potential charges of aggravated rape and drug infractions.

The Paris prosecutor's office told The Associated Press that Brown has been authorized to leave France while the investigation is ongoing.

A post late Tuesday on Brown's Instagram page strongly denied the accusations.

"I WANNA MAKE IT PERFECTLY CLEAR..... THIS IS FALSE," the post said. "FOR MY DAUGHTER AND MY FAMILY THIS IS SO DISPRESPECTFUL AND IS AGAINST MY CHARACTER AND MORALS!!!!!"

Brown's publicists at Sony Music wouldn't comment Tuesday on the complaint or say what Brown, 29, was doing in Paris. His U.S. attorney, Mark Geragos, didn't immediately respond to requests for comment.

Brown has been in repeated legal trouble since pleading guilty to the felony assault in 2009 of his then-girlfriend, Rihanna. He completed his probation in that case in 2015, but has continued to have run-ins with police.

The woman who filed the Paris complaint said she met Brown and his friends overnight Jan. 15-16 at the club Le Crystal in the 8th arrondissement near the Champs-Elysees, and then they all went to the Mandarin Oriental Hotel near the Concorde Plaza in central Paris, according to a police official.

The Mandarin Oriental wouldn't comment on the investigation, and Le Crystal couldn't immediately be reached. There was no unusual activity outside either site.

One of Brown's bodyguards is among the others detained in the Paris investigation, according to the official. They are being held by judicial police in the 17th arrondissement of northwest Paris, the official said.

The police official wasn't authorized to be publicly named to discuss the investigation.

The detention was originally reported by French gossip magazine Closer.

Brown, who burst onto the music scene as a teen, won a Grammy Award in 2011 for best R&B album for "F.A.M.E." and has nominations for other works. His hits include "Look at Me Now," "Run It," and numerous collaborations with other stars, including "Post to Be" and last year's "Freaky Friday" with Lil Dicky.

He released a new single earlier this month and has a new album coming this year. Six of his albums have gone platinum.

He retains a huge following of devoted fans, including nearly 50 million followers on Instagram . He posted an Instagram photo Monday from Paris appearing to show him at a nightclub, among several recent posts. Followers responded with mixed messages to the rape accusation.

It's the latest legal trouble for Brown, who was arrested at the end of a concert last year to face a felony battery charge involving a nightclub photographer.

In 2013, Brown was charged with misdemeanor assault after he was accused of striking a man outside a Washington hotel. He was ordered into rehab but was dismissed for violating facility rules. Brown spent 2½ months in custody.

After he completed court-ordered anger-management classes, Brown was accused of throwing a brick at his mother's car following a counseling session.

After Brown posted a picture to his Instagram followers in January 2018 showing his 3-year-old daughter, Royalty, cuddling with a pet monkey, California fish and wildlife agents seized the capuchin monkey named Fiji from his home in Los Angeles.

Brown was later handed a misdemeanor charge for lacking a permit for the primate. He is scheduled to be arraigned Feb. 6 in Los Angeles.

AP

People walk past the Crystal Club in Paris, Tuesday Jan.22, 2019. U.S. singer Chris Brown and two other people are in custody in Paris after a woman filed a rape complaint, French officials said Tuesday.

Chinese model in derided Dolce & Gabbana ad apologizes

BEIJING (AP)—The Chinese model in advertisements for Italian fashion line Dolce & Gabbana that were widely derided in the country has apologized for her appearance in the campaign.

Zuo Ye (TSUO YEH) says on her Weibo microblog that as a recent college graduate, she hadn't had time to consider the effect of the ads, in which she was filmed trying to eat pizza, spaghetti and a giant version of a cannoli pastry using chopsticks.

Following the criticism of the ads, the Milan designers canceled a Shanghai runway show last year that was meant as a tribute to China as their guest list of Asian celebrities joined protests.

As retailers began pulling their wares, co-founders Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana went on camera to apologize to the Chinese people.

Chelsea Clinton announces pregnancy

NEW YORK (AP)—Chelsea Clinton has announced her family is expanding.

The 38-year-old former first daughter tweeted Tuesday that she and her husband Marc are expecting another child in the summer.

The couple has a daughter Charlotte born in 2014 and a son Aidan born in 2016.

In a reply to congratulations on Twitter, Clinton said Hillary and Bill are thrilled.

Clinton and 41-year-old investment banker Marc Mezvinsky have been married since 2010. They live in New York.

Clinton is writing another children's book to accompany the two she's already published. The picture book about endangered animals is slated for an April release.

Judge limits access to R. Kelly's Chicago recording studio

CHICAGO (AP)—A judge says a Chicago warehouse that R. Kelly is renting can be used only between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. and only as a recording studio.

The Chicago Sun-Times says the Cook County judge also prohibited use of the second floor Tuesday, after building inspectors found faulty stairs.

The ruling comes a week after Chicago building inspectors found code violations at the R&B star's recording studio on the city's near West Side during a court-ordered inspection. Those violations included evidence the industrial space was used as a residence.

Kelly has come under fire after women featured on a Lifetime documentary series "Surviving R. Kelly" made new sexual misconduct allegations against the singer. Kelly has denied the allegations.

New mom opts for day care instead of grandma's care

DEAR ABBY: I gave birth a month ago to a wonderful baby boy. My husband and I originally planned to put him in day care when I go back to work. I carefully researched and eventually found one I was comfortable with. When my mom found out, she said she had assumed she would be watching him, so I eventually told her she could.

My parents watch my sister's young children seven days a week. The children are very ill-behaved due to an absent, immature mother and absent father. I do not want my son subjected to their tantrums and violent behavior, nor do I want him to think that their behavior is acceptable. I love my mom very much, and I feel she deserves time away from children, but more than that, I don't want my baby in that environment. How do I kindly tell her that I've changed my mind? I'm afraid it will hurt her feelings.

AT A LOSS FOR WORDS

DEAR AT A LOSS: Your mother has been watching those children seven days a week for how long? If she hasn't been able to get them to behave, you are right in thinking things would not be any different with your child. Tell your mother—firmly—that you do not want your son to be around his cousins on a daily basis because these are his formative years, and you don't want him to think their behavior is normal. Your thinking is correct, so hold your ground and don't let her talk you out of it.

DEAR ABBY: A friend of mine, "Gladys," was looking for a home for an old dog. "Breezy" was 12, and his owner had died. Gladys was fostering Breezy until a new home could be found. I told her I'd take him if she couldn't find another good home. She ended up finding one.

Breezy was living with his new owners for about a month when they called to tell Gladys the dog "wasn't feeling well." When she went to check on it, she decided the placement wasn't working out and asked if I would take him. I agreed and told her I would give him a good home.

A couple days later, Gladys called saying the previous owners had taken Breezy to a veterinarian and expected her to pay the vet bill because she had taken the dog back. Now she's expecting ME to reimburse her for the $319 vet bill because I have him! I don't think I should be responsible for the bill but offered to pay half. Gladys doesn't agree, and it has turned into a huge fight between friends. Am I responsible for that bill? Please help.

DOG LOVER

DEAR DOG LOVER: No, you are not responsible. You did your friend a favor by agreeing to take the dog off her hands. The folks who adopted Breezy should be paying the vet bill because they are the ones who incurred it. Further, it was very generous of you to offer to pay half so your "friend" wouldn't be stuck paying the whole thing.

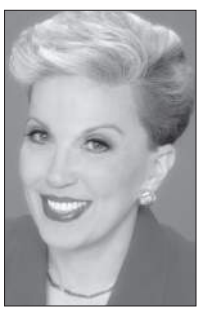
You adopted an old dog. It's likely that there will be more veterinary expenses in the future. I hope you have pet insurance because you may need it.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

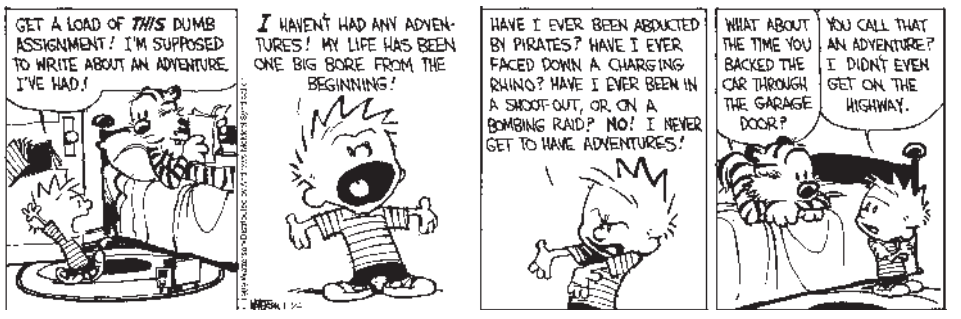


Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


GET A LOAD OF THIS DUMB ASSIGNMENT! I'M SUPPOSED TO WRITE ABOUT AN ADVENTURE. I'VE HAD!
I HAVEN'T HAD ANY ADVENTURES! MY LIFE HAS BEEN ONE BIG BORE FROM THE BEGINNING!
HAVE I EVER BEEN ABDUCTED BY PIRATES? HAVE I EVER FACED DOWN A CHARGING RHINO? HAVE I EVER BEEN IN A SHOOT-OUT, OR ON A BOMBING RAID? NO! I NEVER GET TO HAVE ADVENTURES!
WHAT ABOUT THE TIME YOU BACKED THE CAR THROUGH THE GARAGE DOOR?
YOU CALL THAT AN ADVENTURE? I DIDN'T EVEN GET ON THE HIGHWAY.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

OKAY. THIS POSE IS CALLED "STARTLED CHICKEN."
ARE...ARE YOU SURE YOU AREN'T MAKING THIS UP?
SHH. LESS CHICKEN. MORE STARTLED.
IT FEELS WEIRD.
WEIRD IS GOOD. THIS NEXT ONE IS CALLED "ACME-FLATTENED COYOTE."
1-24

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

"SUCCESS IS WALKING FROM FAILURE TO FAILURE WITH NO LOSS OF ENTHUSIASM." -WINSTON CHURCHILL
I PREFER TO LOUNGE FROM FAILURE TO FAILURE.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Met melody
5 "CSI" settings
9 Apply cream
12 Fender bender
13 Gumbo need
14 Mode lead-in
15 Instrument panel
17 Homer's neighbor
18 Thread holders
19 "Tiny Alice" playwright
21 "Heavens!"
22 Spud
24 Green gem
27 Church seat
28 Ken or Barbie
31 Glamorous Gardner
32 Shoe width
33 Teeny
34 Baseball glove
36 British "Inc."
37 — B'rith
38 Soil
40 Opposite of nyet
41 "Yippee!"
43 Vile
47 Ghostly greeting
48 Music group at a New Year's Eve party
51 Wall St. debut
52 Jacob's twin
53 Author Ferber
54 "A mouse!"
55 Peel
56 Optimistic

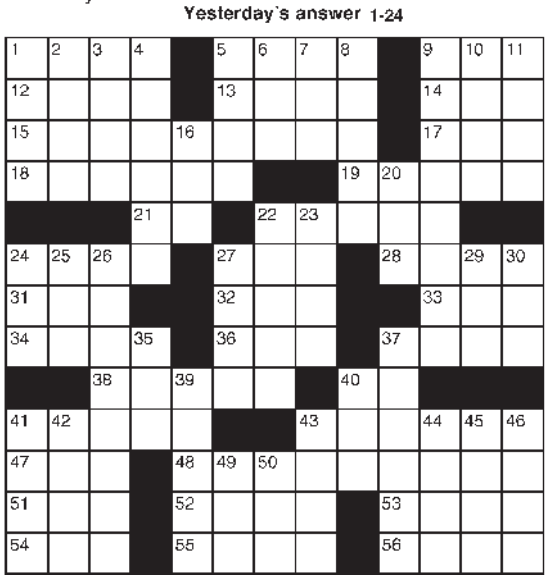
DOWN

1 Tosses in
2 Harvest
3 Not — many words
4 Not on the road
5 Novelist Anita
6 Alias letters
7 "It's c-c-cold!"
8 Nasser's successor
9 "The Da Vinci Code" author
10 Out of the storm
11 Ordered
16 Journalist Nellie
20 Started
22 Pearly whites
23 Dumbstruck
24 Bread spread
25 Bird (Pref.)
26 Appointment tracker
27 Hide
29 Meadow
30 Tiki bar necklace
35 Eastern path
37 Sweeney Todd, for one
39 Actress Winona
40 Female hare
41 Theater award
42 Aspiration
43 Gulf War missile
44 Pedestal part
45 Hostels
46 Crucial time
49 "— was saying ..."
50 Indian bread

Solution time: 24 mins.

M	O	S	S	■	C	O	P	■	S	O	R	E
O	B	I	T	■	A	R	A	■	A	V	O	N
M	O	R	E	O	V	E	R	■	N	E	S	T
S	E	S	A	M	E	■	T	E	T	R	A	S
■	■	■	D	A	M	■	B	L	A	H	■	■
F	A	H	■	N	A	M	■	S	N	A	F	E
E	T	A	T	■	N	B	C	■	A	N	K	A
V	E	N	J	E	■	A	H	A	■	D	O	T
■	■	D	R	E	I	■	A	G	I	■	■	■
F	A	S	I	E	N	■	R	U	I	N	E	D
I	D	O	L	■	S	O	M	E	■	M	O	R	E
L	I	M	E	■	E	V	E	■	E	H	I	E
O	N	E	S	■	I	A	R	■	S	A	N	D

Yesterday's answer 1-24



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Mischa Barton, 33; Tatyana Ali, 40; Ed Helms, 45; Neil Diamond, 78.

Happy Birthday: Slow down and stick to what's most important to you. If you scatter your energy, you will end up running in circles. Look at your personal and professional relationships and consider who you have time for. Clear your slate of excess debris, and set your sights on what you want to accomplish. Your numbers are 4, 15, 23, 28, 30, 33, 45.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Personal gains look promising. Expand your interests and skills, but don't buy in to someone else's scheme. Spend time looking and being your best and concentrating on advancing your ideas and plans. Romantic spending should not be wasted on someone with ulterior motives. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Don't let your personal life disrupt your business affairs. Stick to what needs to be accomplished, and don't stop until you've reached your goal. How you handle your responsibilities will make a difference in the way your colleagues and superiors view you. ✪✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Use your knowledge and expertise to help bring about positive change. Refuse to let someone trying to use you for something throw you off guard. Choose your friends and your lover carefully. Emotional deception is evident. ✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Make some changes at home that will allow you to pursue a creative hobby or entertain more. Set a high standard, and live by your rules. Personal gains look promising if you lead instead of follow. Walk away from unpredictable people. ✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Be open to new beginnings or starting something unusual with someone you enjoy spending time with. A change will do you good and give you access to people and places that will stimulate you mentally. Love is in the stars. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Don't waste time on someone or something that isn't good for you. Avoid excessive situations and people who skirt issues or mislead you. The best changes you can make are the ones you take control of physically and financially. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Listen carefully and base your decisions on what you verify, not what someone tells you. Problems with an older relative will add to your responsibilities. Be kind, but don't make unrealistic promises. Romance will bring you closer to someone special. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Think before you respond. Someone is probably asking for too much or trying to push you in a direction that isn't in your best interest. Let your instincts lead the way to avoid getting involved in someone's trap. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Don't make too much noise or someone will complain. Moderation will be necessary if you want to avoid a stressful situation. Avoid indulgent individuals as well as playing mind games. Stick close to home and to those you trust. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Consider what you want and what you can afford before you sign up for something that could turn out to be a scam. Abide by the rules and regulations when dealing with institutions and government agencies. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* It's important not to reveal secrets if you want to keep things moving along smoothly. Sharing too much personal information will put you in an awkward position. Uncertainty and inconsistency will make it difficult to make a decision. Sit tight. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Emotional matters will escalate if you sit around and stew about what's happened. Focus on giving back, doing something nice for someone or taking better care of your needs. Someone with greater life experience will offer a wise alternative. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are engaging, thoughtful and original. You are intuitive and robust.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	6		2					
3			6			1	4	
	2	8					3	
5		9		7				
				9		5		6
	5					4	2	
	7	3			4			8
					8		7	

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/24

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

7	5	2	9	8	3	1	6	4
6	8	4	1	2	5	7	9	3
1	9	3	4	6	7	5	2	8
8	7	5	3	9	2	4	1	6
2	4	9	6	7	1	3	8	5
3	6	1	5	4	8	2	7	9
9	2	7	8	3	4	6	5	1
5	3	8	7	1	6	9	4	2
4	1	6	2	5	9	8	3	7

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/24

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

GRATUITIES INCLUDED — Solution: 6 letters

S	G	U	E	S	T	S	P	U	O	R	G	C	P	H
S	H	I	F	T	S	E	M	O	N	E	Y	L	A	O
D	A	C	H	E	G	R	A	H	C	N	F	I	Y	T
I	R	L	N	S	P	V	B	E	A	I	R	E	C	E
V	E	H	O	U	A	I	X	C	F	D	(N)	N	H	L
V	N	A	B	N	L	C	C	T	R	E	(E)	T	E	S
Y	N	S	B	L	E	E	E	E	K	H	(T)	J	C	E
T	I	I	U	L	P	E	S	O	A	R	O	A	K	X
N	D	D	L	T	N	S	T	I	P	P	I	N	G	A
E	T	E	C	N	E	E	T	H	G	I	E	I	O	T
W	N	U	S	R	A	B	B	O	N	U	S	T	O	R
T	U	L	E	T	C	E	L	L	O	C	A	O	D	T
A	O	A	D	E	S	S	E	C	O	R	P	R	S	I
X	M	V	O	L	U	N	T	A	R	Y	S	S	D	P
I	A	L	L	O	T	T	E	D	R	I	V	E	R	S

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Accept, Allotted, Amount, Aside, Bars, Bill, Bonus, Cash, Charge, Client, Club, Collect, Diner, Dinner, Divvy, Drivers, Eighteen, Excellent, Fifteen, Goods, Groups, Guests, Hairdresser, Honor, Hotels, Janitors, Lunch, Money, Paycheck, Processed, Pubs, Salon, Service, Shifts, Spas, Taxes, Taxi, Ten, Tipping, Tips, Token, Twenty, Value, Voluntary

Yesterday's Answer: Dysfunctional

The NEW **Volume 55** can be purchased online at: www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

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Municipality of Tinian and Aguiguan
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

PUBLIC NOTICE

January 24, 2019

This is to give notice that the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission's regular meeting scheduled for Friday, January 25, 2019 has been rescheduled to Tuesday, Janaury 29, 2019 at 9:00 a.m.

Please be guided accordingly.

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Tsitsipas reaches semis; Nadal ousts Tiafoe

AP

Spain's Rafael Nadal makes a backhand return to United States' Frances Tiafoe during their quarterfinal match at the Australian Open tennis championships in Melbourne, Australia, Tuesday, Jan. 22, 2019.

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — A post-millennial through and through, Stefanos Tsitsipas sounded as excited about doubling his YouTube channel's followers to more than 30,000 within a few hours—"Oh, my God. Really?!"— as he was about becoming the youngest Grand Slam semifinalist since 2007.

Ah, to be 20, emerging as possibly the Next Big Thing in tennis and getting the opportunity to promote your travel vlogs.

"Guys," he urged folks watching the Australian Open on Tuesday in person or on TV, "if you haven't subscribed, please subscribe."

Lest anyone get the idea that Tsitsipas' stunning victory over Roger Federer at Melbourne Park was a fluke, he followed it up by beating No. 22-seeded Roberto Bautista Agut of Spain 7-5, 4-6, 6-4, 7-6 (2) to become the first player from Greece to reach the final four at a major tournament.

"I knew that win against Federer was important, played a huge role in my image — like, who I am," said Tsitsipas, who eliminated the two-time defending champion in the fourth round Sunday. "But I knew that the biggest challenge was today's match, that I can prove myself once again."

Sure did.

Next for Tsitsipas will be 17-time major champion Rafael Nadal, who stopped the career-best run of another up-and-coming member of the sport's new generation, 21-year-old American Frances Tiafoe, by dominating him 6-3, 6-4, 6-2. Nadal saved the only two break points he faced and broke Tiafoe the first time he served in each set.

In women's action, unseeded 25-year-old Danielle Collins of the U.S. reached her first Slam semifinal with a 2-6, 7-5, 6-1 victory against Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova of Russia. Collins was an NCAA champion at the University of Virginia who began this tournament with an 0-5 record at majors and now has strung together five victories in a row, including over 2016 champion Angelique Kerber.

Collins put aside a poor start Tuesday, including dropping a 16-minute, 28-point, 11-deuce second game to completely dominate the final set, which she opened by grabbing 20 of 23 points.

She'll now face two-time Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova, who is back in the semis at a major for the first time since she was stabbed during an attack at her home in December 2016.

"I didn't really imagine being back," a teary Kvitova said after defeating No. 15 Ash Barty of Australia 6-1, 6-4.

"I'm calling it my 'second career,'" Kvitova said. "So it's the first semifinal of the 'second career.'"

She hadn't been this far at any Slam since Wimbledon in 2014, and at Melbourne since 2012.

Cheered on by a loud, flag-waving contingent of Greek fans inside and outside Rod Laver Arena, Tsitsipas displayed his varied toolbox, producing 22 aces, 30 more winners than unforced errors (68-38) and a nose for getting to the net.

It was a terrific encore to what he did against his idol, the 37-year-old Federer, a result that left Tsitsipas unable to sleep.

Tsitsipas was down a break in the first and third sets before turning both around against Bautista Agut, whose own thrill-ride to the quarterfinals included victories over Andy Murray, a three-time major champion, and Marin Cilic, the 2014 U.S. Open champion and the runner-up to Federer at Melbourne Park a year ago.

"Well, he's a good player, no? He's very complete. He has a good forehand and backhand. He's serving well," Bautista Agut said about Tsitsipas. "I think he knows the game. He knows how to play."

That's why his peers voted him the 2018 Most Improved Player.

And why he's already in the Top 20, seeded 14th in Australia.

Tsitsipas recently was asked what his goal was for this season. The reply: reaching the semifinals at a major. Well, we're all of three weeks into 2019 and that box is checked.

So is he satisfied?

"That's like the starting point to go deeper," Tsitsipas replied. "That's like the minimum, I would call it."

No man as young as Tsitsipas had been this far at any Grand Slam tournament since Novak Djokovic at the 2007 U.S. Open or at the Australian Open since Andy Roddick in 2003.

"It all feels like a fairy tale, almost. I'm just living the dream, living what I've been working hard for," said Tsitsipas, who dropped his racket, fell on his back and covered his face with his hands at match's end. "I mean, I feel a bit emotional but not too much because I know I worked hard to get here."

Seated in his courtside guest box were his parents—his father is his coach; his mother was a tennis player in the Soviet Union—and two siblings, along with Patrick Mouratoglou, who coaches Serena Williams and serves as a mentor to Tsitsipas.

Before introducing them, and other members of his entourage, to the audience during his post-match interview, Tsitsipas discussed his love of "cinematography, filmmaking, photography" and the way the YouTube videos he began making last year serve as a creative outlet.

South Korea will face Qatar in Asian Cup quarterfinals

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Tottenham will be without Son Heung-min for a while longer after the midfielder helped South Korea reach the quarterfinals of the Asian Cup.

South Korea, which finished runner-up in 2015, is one of the tournament favorites but needed extra time to beat Bahrain 2-1 in the round of 16 on Tuesday.

It will face Qatar at the Zayed Sports City Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Friday after the 2022 World Cup host beat Iraq 1-0.

At the Rashid Stadium in Dubai, substitute Kim Jin-Su scored his first international goal right at the end of the first period of extra time to send South Korea through.

The defender, who had only come on 10 minutes earlier, netted with a diving header at the far post following Lee Yong's cross.

Lee had also set up South Korea's first goal with another cross after being picked out by a threaded pass from Son. Bahrain goalkeeper Sayed Shubbar Alawi managed to push out the cross but it went straight to Hwang Hee-chan, who slotted it home.

Bahrain became the first team to score against South Korea in the tournament when it leveled 13 minutes from time.

Hong Chul managed to clear Mahdi Alhumaidan's attempt off the line but Mohamed Saad Alromaihi slammed in the rebound.

Bahrain's task grew harder when Alawi was injured toward the end of regular time. The goalkeeper attempted to carry on but eventually had to be replaced by Abdulkarim Fardan, who had never played a competitive international match.

Like South Korea, Qatar had not let in a goal in the group stage and it preserved that record against Iraq at the Al Nahyan Stadium in Abu Dhabi.

Bassam Al Rawi scored the only goal of the match in the 62nd minute with a free kick into the left side of the net.

Qatar had hit the crossbar early in the match though Abdelkarim Hassan.

Iraq could have ended the match with 10 men, but Safaa Hadi only received a yellow card for a poor challenge late on.

Former US goalie Howard to retire after MLS season

DENVER—Colorado Rapids and former U.S. national team goalkeeper Tim Howard says this season will be his last in Major League Soccer.

Howard made the announcement on social media Tuesday, a day after the Rapids reported to training camp.

"I'm greatly looking forward to kicking off the 2019 MLS season, as it will be my LAST. There will be plenty of time for sentiment later. For now, I am going to enjoy every minute. And as I've always done, compete hard and help lead the Rapids with the sole purpose of winning," he posted to Twitter .

Over the course of his 21-year professional career, the 39-year-old spent 13 seasons in the English Premier League with Manchester United and Everton. He was Premier League Goalkeeper of the Year in 2004 while with Manchester United.

In addition to the Rapids, Howard also played with the MetroStars (1998-2003) in MLS.

Howard's announcement formally confirms the speculation that surrounded Howard last season.

"It's a decision I've been very comfortable with for quite a long time in my own head, and my heart," he said on a conference call with reporters.

Howard made 121 appearances with the national team, starting for the United States at the World Cup in South Africa in 2010 and again in Brazil in 2014. He was the backup to Kasey Keller for the 2006 World Cup in Germany.

His most memorable game in soccer's most prestigious tournament came in Brazil, when he made a tournament-record 15 saves in a loss to Belgium in the round of 16.

Howard holds U.S. men's national team records for most appearances and wins, with 62. He also had 42 shutouts.

He was honored as CONCACAF Goalkeeper of the Year three times.

Howard has made 75 appearances with the Rapids since joining the team in 2016, compiling 257 saves.

Blown-call lawsuit seeks do-over of Rams-Saints game

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—In the legal equivalent of a Hail Mary pass, two New Orleans Saints season ticket holders asked a judge on Tuesday to order the NFL commissioner to reverse the results of the NFC championship game that sent the Los Angeles Rams to the Super Bowl, or schedule a do-over.

Their lawsuit, filed in state court, says Commissioner Roger Goodell should implement a league rule governing "extraordinarily unfair acts." Remedies include reversal of a game's result or the rescheduling of a game — in its entirety or from the point when the act occurred.

At issue is the failure of officials to call interference or roughness penalties when a Rams player leveled a Saints receiver with a helmet-to-helmet hit at a crucial point in Sunday's game. The NFL hasn't yet responded. A hearing is tentatively set for Monday—six days before the Rams meet the New England Patriots in the Super Bowl in Atlanta.

"Why is the rule there if it's not going to be implemented?" asked attorney Frank D'Amico, who filed the suit in state Civil District Court in New Orleans on behalf of Tommy Badeaux and Candis Lambert.

No penalty was called after the Rams' Nickell Robey-Coleman hit Saints receiver Tommylee Lewis while a pass was in the air with less than two minutes to go in regulation on Sunday. A flag would have meant a first down for the Saints, who could have run down the clock and won the game with a field goal. Instead, the Saints kicked a go-ahead field goal with 1:41 left. The Rams came back to tie with a field goal before winning in overtime.

There appears to be no dispute that a penalty should have been called. Robey-Coleman later said he expected a flag. Saints coach Sean Payton said the NFL office acknowledged the error to him after the game.

The question is whether an officiating mistake—even an egregious one—is the type of "club action, non-participant interference, or calamity" that merits the remedy D'Amico's clients seek.

Mike Pereira is among the doubters.

"I understand the frustration," the former vice president of officiating for the NFL, now a Fox Sports analyst, said in an interview. But, he doesn't believe the rule applies in this case.

AP

Los Angeles Rams' Nickell Robey-Coleman breaks up a pass intended for New Orleans Saints' Tommylee Lewis during the second half of the NFL football NFC championship game, Sunday, Jan. 20, 2019, in New Orleans.

NFL to consider expanding replay reviews

Meanwhike, the NFL will consider expanding replay reviews to include certain penalties, including pass interference.

Two people with direct knowledge of the NFL's plans tell The Associated Press that the league's competition committee once again will look into including more plays for video review. The people, who spoke Tuesday on condition of anonymity because the NFL has not publicly announced such plans, stressed that the committee looks into the parameters of replay yearly. It has considered inclusion of what are considered judgment calls by officials in the past.

Officiating once more became a hot topic during Sunday's NFC championship game.

"Considering the current climate after what happened in New Orleans, yes, that's something the committee once again will strongly look at," one person said. "It gets talked about each year, but it's not been something the ownership or the league has gone for."

Indeed, the powerful competition committee always has opposed placing judgment calls of any kind in the replay process. Any changes to replay would need approval by at least 24 of the 32 team owners, but first the competition committee would need to recommend such alterations.

One reason the league has been loath to expand replay is a fear it would significantly lengthen games—and not with any real action.

Expanding the number of coaches' challenges also could occur. That's been discussed before and usually tabled or not presented to the owners. Several head coaches, including Payton, have expressed their support of more challenges.

The competition committee is comprised of chairman Rich McKay, president of the Atlanta Falcons; owners John Mara of the New York Giants and Stephen Jones of the Dallas Cowboys; Mark Murphy, president of the Green Bay Packers; general managers John Elway of the Denver Broncos and the retiring Ozzie Newsome of the Baltimore Ravens; and coaches Mike Tomlin of the Pittsburgh Steelers and, coincidentally, Payton. They will meet at the NFL combine, and also in early March before the league's annual owners meetings in Phoenix at the end of that month.

"It's tough to get over it," Payton said of the non-call with 1:41 left in regulation, which would have given the Saints an opportunity to run down the clock and possibly kick a go-ahead field goal with little time remaining.

Investigation on laser pointed at Brady

NFL security is investigating whether a fan attempted to shine a laser into the face of Patriots quarterback Tom Brady during their AFC championship game.

Local television stations posted footage Tuesday that showed a green light flashing on Brady late in the Patriots' 37-31 overtime victory. At least two instances occurred on their go-ahead drive in the fourth quarter, including a crucial 25-yard pass to tight end Rob Gronkowski.

Laser pointers are banned at most sporting events because of the potential for distraction and safety reasons. The light can damage the retina in the eye after even a short period of time.

Baseball HOF adds four new members

NEW YORK (AP)—Mariano Rivera has become baseball's first unanimous Hall of Fame selection, elected Tuesday along with Roy Halladay, Edgar Martinez and Mike Mussina.

Rivera received all 425 votes in balloting by the Baseball Writers' Association of America announced. The quartet will be enshrined in Cooperstown along with Today's Game Era Committee selections Harold Baines and Lee Smith on July 21.

Ken Griffey Jr. held the mark for top percentage at 99.32 when he was on 437 of 440 ballots two years ago.

Rivera is baseball's career saves leader with 652. With a steady demeanor and a fearsome cut fastball, he won five World Series over 19 seasons with the New York Yankees. He was always at his best in October, getting 42 saves with a 0.70 ERA over 16 postseasons, including 11 saves in the World Series.

Halladay, an ace with the Toronto Blue Jays and Philadelphia Phillies, got 85.4 percent and will be the first posthumous inductee since Deacon White in 2013 and Ron Santo in 2012. Halladay died in November 2017 at 40 years old when an airplane he was flying crashed into the Gulf of Mexico off the coast of Florida.

Martinez was a .312 hitter over 18 seasons with Seattle. He got 85.4 percent in his 10th and final try on the writers' ballot. He and Baines will join 2014 inductee Frank Thomas as the only Hall of Famers to play the majority of their games at designated hitter. David Ortiz will be eligible in 2022.

Mussina was a steady right-hander for the Yankees and Baltimore Orioles who went 270-153 with 2,813 strikeouts over 18 seasons. He received 76.7 percent, getting seven more votes than the 319 required for election.

Barry Bonds and Roger Clemens made gains but again fell short in their seventh times on the ballot. Bonds got 59.1 percent and Clemens 59.5.

Rivera grew up in Panama the son of a fisherman. He signed with New York in 1990, debuted in the majors as a 25-year-old in 1995 and a year later emerged as one of the game's best relievers. Along with a core including Derek Jeter, Andy Pettitte and Jorge Posada, Rivera helped the Yankees win four World Series from 1996-2000 and another in 2009.

"Hall of Fame teammate. Hall of Fame person," Jeter said in a statement.

The Yankees didn't even wait until his final game to retire his No. 42 — he was the last player in the major leagues to wear that number, grandfathered to him when No. 42 was retired in honor of Jackie Robinson in 1997.

"Wearing No. 42, representing Jackie Robinson, I assume he was the first No. 42 elected," Rivera said. "To be the last No. 42 elected to the Hall of Fame, and unanimously, is amazing."

Though his music taste skews more Christian rock than heavy metal, Rivera toed the Yankee Stadium rubber to Metallica's "Enter Sandman" for much of his career. "The Sandman" became synonymous with the song's foreboding guitar riff, and the Rock and Roll Hall of Famers performed it live at Yankee Stadium in 2013 before one of Rivera's final home games.

Bill Ballou of The Telegram & Gazette in Worcester, Massachusetts, wrote in November that because he didn't plan to vote for Rivera, he wouldn't submit a ballot. Ballou announced Tuesday he had changed his mind and sent a ballot that included Rivera.

Rivera and Smith will be the seventh and eighth relievers in the Hall, joining Hoyt Wilhelm (1985), Rollie Fingers (1992), Dennis Eckersley (2004), Bruce Sutter (2006), Rich Gossage (2008) and Trevor Hoffman (2018).

Halladay won two Cy Young Awards, one each with Toronto and Philadelphia, before ending his career in 2013 at 36 years old due to back injuries.

George, Westbrook lead Thunder past Blazers

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP)—A renewed focus on defense has the Oklahoma City Thunder on another winning streak.

Paul George had 36 points, eight rebounds and five steals, Russell Westbrook had a triple-double of 29 points, 14 assists and 10 rebounds and the Thunder beat the Portland Trail Blazers 123-114 on Tuesday night.

Steven Adams and Terrance Ferguson each added 14 points for Oklahoma City, which snapped a three-game losing streak to Portland at Chesapeake Energy Arena. After a stretch of losing five of six games, during which they gave up 154, 142 and 138 points in defeats, the Thunder have won three straight and moved back into third place in the fluid Western Conference standings.

Damian Lillard had 34 points and eight assists, and C.J. McCollum scored 31 for Portland, which committed 19 turnovers—five more than its average and had a three-game winning streak snapped. Jusuf Nurkic had 22 points and 15 rebounds.

Sixteen of those Portland turnovers came on Thunder steals. George—who ranks second in the NBA (behind Westbrook) in steals at 2.33 per game—led the way, and Ferguson added four steals, many of which led to points at the other end for Oklahoma City.

"That's what we lean on—our size, our length, our ability to be able to make it tough for 48 minutes," Westbrook said. "Eventually we wear out teams."

AP

Oklahoma City Thunder forward Paul George, right, goes up for a dunk in front of Portland Trail Blazers forward Meyers Leonard (11) and guard C.J. McCollum, center, in the second half of an NBA basketball game in Oklahoma City, Tuesday, Jan. 22, 2019.

Except for McCollum, who went 7 of 12 from 3-point range, the Blazers struggled from behind the arc, going 10 for 36. Oklahoma City hit 11 of 23 3-point attempts.

"They've been shooting the three well in recent games," Portland coach Terry Stotts said of the Thunder. "That made the difference, but I thought the biggest difference in the game was our turnovers that they created. The two quarters that we lost, we had six turnovers in each of those quarters and that just fueled their runs."

McCollum's seventh 3-pointer, with 5:07 left, pulled Portland within 109-106, but George keyed a game-sealing run by the Thunder, hitting four free throws and then stealing a pass intended for Nurkic and going for a layup to extend Oklahoma City's lead to 117-108 with 2:17 left. Westbrook capped the win with a pair of ferocious dunks in the final 1:24.

Timberwolves 118, Suns 91

In Phoenix, two days earlier, the short-handed Suns gave Minnesota everything it could handle in a two-point road loss to the Timberwolves.

On Tuesday night, it was no contest. A Minnesota blowout in the desert.

Karl-Anthony Towns had 25 points, 18 rebounds and seven assists, rookie Josh Okogie scored a career-best 21 and the Timberwolves rolled past the Suns.

"It's a great thing to have a rookie like Josh play as well as he did," Towns said. "He came in and played with a lot of energy and gave us a spark and you can't ask any more from him. He's doing a great job all year."

Minnesota needed Derrick Rose's driving bank shot at the buzzer to beat Phoenix 116-114 in Minneapolis on Sunday.

In both games, Phoenix was without centers Deandre Ayton (left ankle sprain) and Richaun Holmes (right foot sprain).

Raptors 120, Kings 105

In Toronto, even without Kawhi Leonard in the lineup, the rested Toronto Raptors were too much for the tired Sacramento Kings.

Kyle Lowry and Fred VanVleet each scored 19 points, Pascal Siakam had 18 and the Raptors beat the Kings.

Serge Ibaka had 15 points and 10 rebounds as the Raptors extended their home winning streak to 10 games. Toronto's franchise record for consecutive home wins is 12.

C.J. Miles scored a season-high 15 points and Norm Powell added 11 as Toronto won for the eighth time in nine games.

Mavericks 106, Clippers 98

In Dallas, Dennis Smith Jr. faked a pass and hit a layup in one sweeping motion a few minutes before Luka Doncic dribbled behind his back at the free-throw line and drove for a left-handed layup.

The Dallas Mavericks are back to trying to figure out how to make the two young stars fit in the same backcourt.

Smith had 17 points and eight rebounds in his return after a week away from the team amid trade talk, and the Mavericks beat the Los Angeles Clippers.

Smith had two of his four assists on a layup and alley-oop dunk in the fourth quarter for DeAndre Jordan, who had 13 points, 16 rebounds and four blocks in his third game against the team with which the 6-foot-11 center from Texas spent his first 10 seasons.

Woods brings new clubs, new expectations to Torrey Pines

SAN DIEGO—On a delightful Tuesday by the Pacific Ocean, with the sun beaming and the breezes on the soft side, Tiger Woods took to one of his favorite stages in golf alongside Jordan Spieth.

It was here at Torrey Pines that Woods got his first taste of professional golf as he and his father would attend the Andy Williams San Diego Open. Then he built what would be a career for most of his colleagues by winning this tournament, now known as the Farmers Insurance Open, a record seven times. For good measure, he captured the 2008 U.S. Open at Torrey.

He's been coming to Torrey for so long, he basically knows every inch and blade of grass, every hump and bump from tee to green, every break on the putting surfaces of the massive property.

"How long have you been coming down here?" Spieth asked during the 10-hole practice round ahead of Thursday's start of the Farmers Insurance Open.

"Well, 10 years longer than you've been alive," Woods replied.

That made for a good laugh between the two. But while coming here once might have felt like old hat for Woods, who turned 43 last month, there's something different about this trip. Unlike last year, when he came to Torrey full of doubt and lacking expectations in his return to the game following spinal fusion surgery, Woods is healthy, happy and full of optimism ahead of his 2019 debut. And he expects to win this year, just as he did last year when he captured The Tour Championship in the season finale.

TOUGH

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focused on his doubles game.

The Commonwealth junior player teamed up with New Zealand's Alex Evans and they were at the upper half of the draw. The CNM-New Zealand duo challenged the Japanese pair of Hayato Nakamura and Rintaro Yamada and the first round match last Tuesday went through a supertie-breaker third set. Schorr and Evans drew first blood with an impressive 6-2 victory, but missed the sweep when the Japanese players found their grove and took a 6-3 win. Then in the decider, Yamada and Nakamura kept their momentum en route to a 10-7 win. The Japanese played in another extended game in the second round, but this time were beaten by No. 8 seed Satchel Benn and Jin Dassanayake of New Zealand, 4-6, 7-5, 11-9.

Meanwhile, Schorr will leave Wellington this weekend to go to Christchurch and compete in the 2019 Wilson Tennis Canterbury ITF.

The 16-year-old's second tournament in New Zealand will run from Jan. 28 to Feb. 2 at the TrustPower Wilding Park Tennis Centre and he is entered in the main draw of both the singles and doubles events. The draw sheets for the Wilson Tennis Canterbury ITF have yet to be posted, but majority of the players seeing action in the Wellington event will also compete in the Grade 4 tournament. Forty-six players are listed on the main draw acceptance roster, including the highest-ranked in the field—world No. 73 Chen Dong of Australia.

Schorr is currently ranked No. 991 and will be joined in the tournament by players from Japan, New Zealand, Vanuatu, Hong Kong, and the Philippines.

After the event in Christchurch, the CNMI junior player will cap his three-tournament trip to New Zealand in Auckland, as he sees action in the NZ ITF Summer Championships that will take place from Feb. 5 to 9 at the Scarbro Tennis Centre.

MANIBUSAN

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(April), Rick Kautz (May), Das Krishnan (June), John "Nonni" Cruz (July), Larry A. Deleon Guerrero (August), Steve Balakrishna (September), Tony Deleon Guerrero (October), and Frank Castro (November) in the battle for the season-ending SGA Ace of the Aces award.

The coveted trophy will be contested this weekend with a two-round tournament at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort. The opener this Saturday will be played on the east course of the Kagman facility, while the qualifiers will move to the west on Sunday for the second and last round.

Meanwhile, besides his runner-up finish in the December Ace, Nick Sablan also earned closest to the pin honors on hole No. 6 and 15. Other closest to the pin winners were Aldan on No. 12 and Demapan on No. 12, while the former also had the longest drives on No. 7 and 18.

MCS

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three games.

In other results, Mt. Carmel recorded twin wins in separate venues.

Over at the MCS' court in Chalan Kanoa, the Lady Knights' varsity team eked out a three-set triumph over SIS 2. MCS dropped the opening set, 21-25, but took the last two, 26-24, 15-7, to foil SIS 2's upset bid. The Lady Knights and Lady Geckos fought tooth and nail in the second set with MCS showing poise in the end and then riding on their momentum to cruise to victory in the decider. With the tough win, MCS varsity improved to a 7-2 record and kept the No. 2 spot in the team standings, while SIS 2 slid to a 1-4 mark.

After escaping past SIS 2, MCS varsity captain Louisa Han has called on her teammates to work harder on their chemistry. She acknowledged that the need for her team to gel must take place now and this will only be possible through having more practice sessions.

"Knowing the season is coming to an end, my team and I will be having extra practices," Han said. "We will strengthen our teamwork and work on the physical and mental aspects of our game to help build the confidence we need. Building that confidence will help us handle the pressure on the court."

MCS junior varsity duplicated the varsity squad's triumph after slipping past Agape Christian School, 25-20, 18-25, 15-10, at the Torchbearers' turf in Gualo Rai. It was MCS JV's second win against six losses, while Agape has only one victory to show so far after eight games.

Meanwhile, the game between between GCA and MCS varsity team was reset, while SIS 1 was slated to meet host Agape in the other girls division match yesterday. The rescheduled games along with other make-up matches are expected to be played this week, as organizers are aiming to kick off the playoffs next week.

Asian Football Confederation B Coaching Certificate Course

PHOTOS By JILL ESPIRITU/GUAM FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Participants and instructors in the Asian Football Confederation B Coaching Certificate Course pose for a photo at the Guam Football Association National Training Center in Dededo last week before starting their classroom session.

AFC instructor Yusuke Adachi of Japan gives pointers to Guam and CNMI coaches.

Coaches listen to instructions from the facilitator of the practical assessment session of the course.

The CNMI's Irish Pagarao keeps the ball in place as they wait for the start of the drills.

The CNMI's Ruselle Zapanta, left, joins other coaches in performing stretching drills.

The CNMI's Jersh Angeles catches the ball during a goalkeeping training session with Guam's Ross Awa.

The CNMI's Ruselle Zapanta gestures before proceeding with a small-sided game that was part of their training session.

The CNMI's Jersh Angeles, left, gestures during a classroom discussion.

Tsitsipas reaches semis; Nadal ousts Tiafoe

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MCS, GCA top opponents

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

A Mt. Carmel School varsity team player hits the ball during an earlier game against Saipan International School 2 in the CCOPSA volleyball league at the SIS court in As Lito.

By ROBY N. PAMINTUAN
pamintuanroby@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Mt. Carmel School notched a pair of victories, while Grace Christian Academy also prevailed in the girls division game in the 2018-2019 Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools Association Volleyball League last Tuesday.

The Lady Eagles vaulted over Saipan International School 1, winning the match played at former's home court in Navy Hill after only two sets, 25-6, 25-12. With the sweep, GCA pushed its record to a league-leading 7-1, while SIS 1 was handed its first defeat of the season after securing victories in its first

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Robbie Schorr, seen here going for a backhand return during a local tournament last year, completed his first tournament in New Zealand.

Tough opening matches for Schorr

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI's Robbie Schorr played in challenging matches in the first stop of his series of ITF Juniors tournaments in New Zealand.

He had close matches in both the singles and doubles events of the 2019 Tecnifibre Wellington ITF Juniors at the Renouf Tennis Centre in Wellington. In the singles division's first round last Monday, the unranked Schorr was pitted against qualifier Jack Loutit of Australia and the match went back and forth before the latter escaped with a 6-4, 6-4 victory. The Aussie was then defeated by No. 14 seed and his compatriot Jack MacCarthy in the second round, 6-3, 3-6, 6-3, while Schorr, after the loss,

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Manibusan qualifies for SGA Ace of Aces

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

CNMI Attorney General Edward Manibusan booked the final ticket for the 2018 Saipan Golfers Association Ace of Aces Tournament after ruling the group's last monthly event.

Manibusan shot a net 68 for a one-stroke win over Nick Sablan during the SGA December Ace of the Month held last Dec. 9 at the Kingfisher Golf Links. The 6-handicapper fired a 38 on the front nines and had an even 36 on the back for a gross 74. Sablan, also a 6-handicapper, had a better score in the first nine holes with his 1-over 37, but failed to keep the lead when he carded a 2-over par 38 in the last nine for a gross 75 and net 69. Joe H. Aldan rounded out the Top 3 in last month's competition after registering a net 72. The third finisher had a 13 handicap and posted a 42 and 43 on the front and back nines, respectively, for a gross 85.

With Manibusan taking the December Ace, he now joins Aldan (January), Joe I. Sablan (February), Larry I. Deleon Guerrero (March), Alex Tudela

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CONTRIBUTEDPHOTO

CNMI Attorney General Edward Manibusan tees off at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort.